

JAMES KURTH: LOSING IRAQ ■ KEVIN PHILLIPS: BUSH THE SON

MARCH 15, 2004

The American Conservative

Mel Gibson's Passion



The Christ
The Controversy

GONE WITH THE JOBS

As a Korean War veteran, I applaud President Bush's War on Terror, but my wife and I represent two conservative votes that Bush will not receive. While I cannot fathom the left-wing lunacy of the Democratic Party, we are no longer willing to vote Republican for two reasons: amnesty for illegals and job outsourcing.

I was bowled over when I heard Gregory Mankiw, chairman of Bush's Council of Economic Advisors. We live in Illinois, which has been devastated by job loss, so to hear him say that jobs moving overseas is a good thing passes all understanding. Illinois leads the nation in manufacturing jobs lost and in people moving out. Perhaps they're moving to Mexico and India to follow their jobs. I don't know, but I will definitely not support Bush in his quest to lose the entire conservative vote.

AL MENDENHALL
Springfield, Ill.

PEROUTKA IN '04?

Conservatives like Bill Riley (Forum, Feb. 16) who are totally opposed to the Bush administration's policies on immigration, the budget, and global empire, won't have to make a choice between voting for a far-left Democrat like Kerry or staying home in November.

Constitution Party candidate Michael Peroutka is an articulate, attractive conservative who is running for president and who takes a principled conservative stand on all those issues. That's the person I am voting for this November, and I encourage Mr. Riley and all other conservatives to join me.

K.C. MCALPIN
Falls Church, Va.

NONE OF THE ABOVE

The reaction of one of your readers has me nonplussed (Forum, Feb. 16). Not voting for socialist party "A" in favor of casting a vote for socialist party "B"

sends no message for conservative values. On the contrary, it seems to say, "You people in 'A' need to get more socialistic." Is that what's really wanted?

There are alternatives. In the 2000 election, I was part of the half of the eligible electorate that didn't vote. It was something like Bush: 25 percent; Gore: 25 percent; not interested in either: 50 percent. This is a viable alternative that political people notice. And if the disillusioned must vote, there are third-party candidates whose positions make more sense than those of the two majors.

BUD WOOD
Henderson, Nev.

LOSING FAITH

Mr. Buchanan's cover story (March 1) does an excellent job in describing how the neocons have transformed the foreign policy of the White House into one of Wilsonian interventionism. At Wednesday night Bible study, the preacher announced how fortunate America is to have Bush as president. The rationale being that our leader supports traditional marriage and opposes abortion and stem-cell research. The preacher failed to mention the lost American lives for whom the president is responsible and that we were lied into an unjust war. It is a time for a change at 1600 Pennsylvania Avenue, despite the setback it may cause in our ongoing culture war.

STEVE WUORI
East Boston, Mass.

MARS OR BUST

From the tone of Pat Buchanan's "Kiss the Old America Good-Bye" (Feb. 16), I detect that he is displeased with the notion of granting amnesty to millions of illegal aliens. So am I. But then I have learned to become disappointed with the Bush presidency.

My objections are several: amnesty is unaffordable, violates the rule of law, is unfair to those who enter legally, ignores crimes committed against American

citizens by illegals, dilutes the value of citizenship, and blurs the identity of the United States. And if we really are in a war with terrorists, why do we tolerate open borders?

Granting legal status to eight, ten, or 20 million illegals is a nation-breaker. Your readers are aware that amnesty, out of control courts, regulation, and globalization have consequences. We also know we are not a majority. Granted, there are a lot of Republicans in America—Bush is a Republican—but not that many conservatives.

In the near term, we will have to pay more money to government—California's taxpayers already each pay \$2000 a year for illegal aliens. In the long term, what are we supposed to do? I voted for Bush, but I see America dying, and the Republicans just want to go to Mars.

JOHN HILLMAN
Flower Mound, Texas

INFANTILE FREEDOM

Fred Reed's insights are right on the mark (March 1). The only freedom that many Americans really want is freedom from responsibility. They want their sex, drugs, gambling, and other self-destructive behaviors, but when they go broke, lose their possessions, or get ill, they want the government to take care of them. This is not freedom; this is childhood, but because it increases the power and control of the government it is not discouraged. Instead, programs are expanded to the delight of the government bureaucracy.

Very few people want real freedom. Few even know what it is.

JOHN DENTE
Wilmington, Del.

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His Father's Son

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[WORLD]

OPERATION HAITIAN FREEDOM

An interesting testing ground for the neo-conservative doctrine of imposing democracy by invasion is Haiti, now a stable and flourishing example of popular rule, evocative of the New England town meetings of America's own recent past. This a mere decade after U.S. troops intervened to restore the deposed elected president Jean-Bertrand Aristide to power.

Well, maybe not that stable and flourishing. Haiti is actually in the early stages of civil war: cities controlled by armed gangs, commerce at a halt, hospitals closed, thousands on the brink of starvation. Aristide in power proved more demagogue than democrat. But what about the opposition—surely there are democrats there? One of the principle opposition groups is called the Cannibal Army, which has since wisely changed its name to the Anticolonist Liberation Front; one cynic we know commented that they would have an even better chance of receiving funding from the National Endowment for Democracy and AEI if they chose instead as their name the “Abraham Lincoln Brigade.”

So then perhaps Haiti has tempered the neocon impulse to impose democracy by force of American arms in places where it has no cultural or historical roots? Absolutely not. Neoconservative foreign policy theorist Max Boot explains that Haiti does indeed show that democracy can be imposed by force, provided the U.S. Army stays long enough. The Marines occupied Haiti for 20 years from Woodrow Wilson to Franklin Roosevelt. That, concluded Boot, wasn't long enough. Presumably a 30-year occupation would have brought the habits of democracy to the volatile republic. According to neocons, the lesson is: get ready for a really long occupation of Iraq.



MIKE KEEFE www.caglecartoons.com

[ELECTION]

SKIRTING ISSUES

Scandal time, scandal time. If one had to pinpoint a moment when the American conservative movement lost its way in the 1990s, one could do worse than to select the week when the Monica Lewinsky scandal attained critical mass, and the entire conservative movement salivated over the prospect of deposing an (irritatingly) popular president. When Ken Starr, who had been hired to investigate Whitewater, devoted virtually his entire final report to a sex scandal, the *Weekly Standard* labeled it a “home run” and put an heroic depiction of Starr on the cover. For the Right, it was such an amusing substitute for engaging Americans in real debates about taxes, the economy, the culture, and foreign policy.

Last week's eruption of “Interngate,” this time about an alleged dalliance of John Kerry's, seems at this writing to have had even less legs than the President Bush “AWOL from the National Guard” story. Frankly, it's a relief. We are hard put to imagine how either of these stories—if they became the plot anchors for the fall campaign—would speak well about democracy in America.

It's not as if there isn't much of critical

importance to talk about. President Bush has taken the country in radical new directions: he has started one preemptive war and may plan more, and he has proposed an dramatic loosening of our immigration laws. Prospective Democratic nominee John Kerry has been evasive about the first, silent about the second. If these issues are not fully debated in the presidential campaign cycle—if instead the election narrative is one of scandal and counter-scandal—we will all be much the poorer.

[IMMIGRATION]

FRIENDS LIKE THESE

President Bush asserts that the U.S. has “no more important relationship in the world than the one we have with Mexico.” But apparently his affection goes unrequited. When the U.S. national soccer team played in Zapopan, Mexico last month, the crowd jeered when “The Star-Spangled Banner” played and shouted “Osama!” when our team left the field. And it wasn't as if Bush's best friends were sore losers. The team we beat was Canada's.

Anti-American sentiment doesn't stop at the Rio Grande. Not so long ago, at a Los Angeles meeting of the Mexican and

American soccer teams, the crowd booed our national anthem and showered our players with garbage. In California. Assimilation, anyone?

As the president lays plans to open our southern border—and to pardon millions of Mexicans already here illegally—he might ask how zealous the beneficiaries of his largesse are to become Americans. After all, citizenship means more than permission to work. It's pledging loyalty to a particular culture and putting roots in a certain place.

The future Republicans of Karl Rove's fantasy already have a country. It isn't ours, and though they may be looking for work, they have no plans to transfer allegiance. Just ask an American soccer team that's no doubt tired of being kicked around.

[WAR]

FOR THE CHILDREN

The case for war came with a swagger. Dismiss one reason and, like hydra's heads, two would grow in its place. But when no WMDs—much less nuclear weapons—turned up, no al-Qaeda link surfaced, and no 9/11 tie-in emerged, the administration went grasping for *causa belli*. Low on the list, it found humanitarian grounds and fast elevated that positive side effect to prime justification.

Human Rights Watch might have been counted on to join that chorus—it has done much to spotlight Saddam's atrocities—but instead just registered a resounding vote of no confidence. “[T]he Iraq war and the effort to justify it even in part in humanitarian terms risk giving humanitarian intervention a bad name,” executive director Ken Roth writes on behalf of the organization. “Intervention was not the last reasonable option to stop Iraqi atrocities.”

Roth is clear-eyed about Saddam's horrors. He certainly believes that those who perpetrate crimes against humanity

must be prosecuted, “but the extraordinary remedy of humanitarian intervention should not be used simply to secure justice for past crimes.” Enter just war. “Humanitarian intervention that occurs without the consent of the relevant government can be justified only in the face of ongoing or imminent genocide, or comparable mass slaughter or loss of life,” Roth writes, and “brutal as Saddam Hussein's reign had been, the scope of the Iraqi government's killing in March 2003 was not of the exceptional and dire magnitude that would justify humanitarian intervention.”

Roth goes on to point out the implausibility of using human-rights violations as a primary justification, “If Saddam Hussein had been overthrown and the issue of weapons of mass destruction reliably dealt with, there clearly would have been no war...” Indeed, if the purpose for our war was humanitarian, we would have first tried something short of full-scale invasion. But then the administration already knows that. They were just hoping no one would notice the bait-and-switch.

[POLITICS]

KIRK'S DISSENT

Each week we receive anguished calls and letters: is there anyone in the presidential field a conservative can support with a clear conscience? It is too soon for this magazine to make any endorsement, and this should read as no portent, but we noticed an interesting piece of conservative history last week.

Russell Kirk, author of *The Conservative Mind* and one of the intellectual founders of the American Right, was so disenchanted with the foreign policy of both major parties in 1944 that he voted for Socialist candidate Norman Thomas. Then in 1976, Kirk voted for the independent candidacy of Eugene McCarthy. No party had an *a priori* claim to his vote then—or to ours now. ■

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Trading Away America

If a third-party populist were to run in 2004 on Ross Perot's signature issues of unfair trade and mammoth deficits, George W. Bush would suffer the fate of his

father. He would be a one-term president, fortunate to get 40 percent of the vote. For the combined budget and trade deficits George W. has run up dwarf anything his father produced.

Even before the cost of war is factored in, the fiscal deficit for 2004 is \$521 billion. But the trade deficit, five times as large as any his father ran, is a graver matter. The second American Century may be aborted.

In 2003, our merchandise trade deficit came in at \$550 billion, 5 percent of our gross domestic product. With China, our trade deficit hit \$124 billion. U.S. imports now account for 100 percent of China's growth.

To the Alfred E. Newman Economic Club that meets at the *Wall Street Journal* editorial offices, such trade deficits don't matter. But President Bush and Karl Rove had best pay heed.

For factory closures, lost jobs, and the outsourcing of back-office work to India and Asia are the hottest issues in the Democratic primaries and a huge liability for a president who has presided over the disappearance of one in every six manufacturing jobs in the USA.

The trade deficit is also behind the dollar's loss of 15 percent of its value against major world currencies last year. Only huge purchases of Treasury bonds by the Bank of Japan and the willingness of Beijing to pile up a hoard of dollar reserves prevents a run.

Why are China and Japan subsidizing our consumption? For the same reason a drug dealer hands out samples of

crack cocaine to school kids. To get them hooked.

By keeping the value of their currencies low, Japan and China not only keep their factories humming, as ours shut down, they are effecting the steady transfer of the factors of production from America to Asia. They are making this once self-sufficient Republic a future dependency of Asia, as we ship them our industrial base, our technology, factories, plants, and skilled jobs.

In classical liberal economics, free trade is win-win. But that is not true of power politics, where, as one nation rises, another recedes. As China knows and we have forgotten, trade is foremost among the means nations use to advance in industrial and military power at the expense of rivals. Great powers that run chronic trade deficits, with declining currencies, are invariably fading powers.

As it rushed to the rescue of Gregory Mankiw, the Bush adviser who celebrated outsourcing as good for America, the *WSJ* tutored us:

If country X does or makes something with relatively low cost compared to country Y, then country X should make it. Country Y is thus released to earn higher returns on something else.

Fine as theory. But if country X is the Germany of Kaiser Bill and Admiral von Tirpitz and country Y is the Britain of Lord Salisbury, one indulges such drivel at the risk of national survival.

China is becoming the factory floor of

the world. And as her leaders force her people to sacrifice for the future, America, where the consumer is king, indulges herself in the present. In the free-trade catechism, what's good for me now is good for America. Yet not only does this contradict common sense, history reveals it to be the folly of every declining great power from Holland to Spain to Britain.

From the Britain of the Acts of Navigation to the America of Lincoln and Theodore Roosevelt, to Bismarck's Germany and China today, big nations that treat trade as a matter of paramount importance are the rising powers that come to dominate the world.

The Chinese are the ants of summer, gathering for the winter. Americans are grasshoppers consuming themselves into dissipation.

Last October, Warren Buffett revealed that he was speculating in foreign currencies, betting against the dollar: "[O]ur country," he wrote, "has been behaving like an extraordinarily rich family that possesses an immense farm. In order to consume 4% more than we produce—that's the trade deficit—we have, day to day, been both selling pieces of the farm and increasing the mortgage on what we still own."

Bush is indeed the fortunate son. Not only has he no Perot in the race, he is running against a senator who voted for NAFTA, the WTO, and permanent MFN for China, and is equally oblivious to the truths Warren Buffett has recognized.

We've said it before. America needs a new party, an America First Party that will stand against amnesty for illegal aliens, walk out of the WTO, and abandon these imperial wars that are bleeding and bankrupting our country financially and morally. ■

[mel gibson's passion]

The Christ—The Controversy

Testifying for Christ won't get you thrown to the lions anymore, but it might get you denounced by Abe Foxman.

By John Zmirak

TO SEE THE PREVIEW of Mel Gibson's new film "The Passion of the Christ," it wasn't enough to be a film critic; the studio, Icon, had suspended screenings for ordinary journalists by the time I asked for a ticket. Instead, I had to take a back door—using my Catholic connections to score a seat at one of the film's many church-based screenings, designed to build word of mouth among pastors and their congregations. I traveled from New York City to Darien, Connecticut, to a shiny new non-denominational Christian fellowship. My name wasn't on the list, so I had to speak with an executive from Icon. A gracious and beautiful woman, she was beside herself trying to keep the event free of hostile press. She asked me a few questions, none of which seemed to come to the point, then finally posed the crucial one: "Are you a believer?"

I said, "Absolutely." She looked relieved but went on to explain: "It's just that ever since Mr. Abraham Foxman snuck in to one of our screenings, we've had to be very careful ..." she said, then paused in thought. "You know, now that he has seen it, I think it will start to work on his heart. Let's

pray that he has a spiritual awakening because of the film. That's why it was made."

"The Passion of the Christ" has been the target of an extraordinary campaign of attempted prior censorship on the part of Abraham Foxman, national director of the Anti-Defamation League. But for all the furious denunciations the film has garnered from professional anti-Semites, Jewish people who see "The Passion" are certain to exhibit more fair-mindedness than their self-appointed spokesmen. Those who bestir themselves to view such an aggressively Christian movie will probably not be too surprised to see that it presents the death of Christ from, well... a *Christian* perspective. Likewise, it's impressive how many Jews in America and Israel expend themselves in pursuing a genuine, fair peace settlement with Palestinians—even as suicide bombers target Jewish civilians.

But the leaders of some Jewish groups will certainly complain—as some Catholic organizations screamed outrage at such movies as "Priest" and "The Boys of St. Vincent's," which depicted problems of homosexuality

and pedophilia among the clergy. (Then events caught up with them, and real news reports of Church scandals made the films seem pale by comparison.) In doing so, Foxman and his associates will be making a great strategic mistake—sparking and fanning anti-Semitic resentment where it needn't exist.

There is nothing in "The Passion" regarding the Jewish leaders of the time and their treatment of Christ that does not come from the New Testament itself—which Christians regard as divinely inspired. (In fact, the key events are confirmed by the Jewish Talmud.) Gibson invents nothing, embellishes nothing, does nothing to suggest that all Jews rejected Christ or sought His death. Because "The Passion" limits its scope to Jesus' last 18 hours of life, it doesn't take on the profound mystery—which puzzled St. Paul (Rom. 11)—of why a majority of Jews ultimately did not accept their Messiah, leaving only a saving remnant to lead the early Church.

I look forward eagerly to David Klinghoffer's upcoming, *Why the Jews Rejected Christ*. Himself a convert to Orthodox Judaism, Klinghoffer is unfailingly fair to Christians, and his account



PHILIPPE ANTONELLO

promises to throw light on the most enduring conundrum of salvation history. The best reflections I have read on the question occur in *Salvation is from the Jews*, by the brilliant Jewish Catholic Roy Schoeman. He speculates that the gentiles would never have accepted Christ had He become the standard of a unified, resurgent Jewish nation. On this reading, there is something sacrificial, even redemptive, in the sufferings and wanderings of the Jewish people ever since. Perhaps Jesus was not the only Jew whose passion plays a part in the salvation of the gentiles.

More than any other film I've seen of Jesus' life, "The Passion" goes out of its way to establish the Jewishness of Christ, His mother, and His apostles—from costumes to casting. Mary, for instance, is portrayed by Maia Morgenstern, a veteran of Bucharest's State Jewish Theater, whose parents survived the Holocaust. The use of Aramaic dialogue and of Middle Eastern music places these events squarely in their historical context and shows the trial and execution of Jesus for what they were: an intra-Jewish conflict over whether the rabbi Joshua ben Joseph was in fact the Messiah or a blasphemer who justly deserved the death penalty. (The debate in the Sanhedrin, during which several

rabbis stand up in Jesus' defense, turns into a squabble that evokes the raucous floor of Israel's Knesset.)

Make no mistake: as the Gospels make clear, Jesus did indeed say things that contravened the law of Moses—divinely imposed, the highest, purest religion existing on earth. In the high priest's presence, Jesus asserted His own divinity. Faced with this, the high priest had only two choices: bow down and worship Jesus or put Him to death.

There is no room in the Gospels for the liberal 19th-century myth of Jesus as a great moral teacher, unjustly persecuted. As C.S. Lewis has written, Jesus was either the Son of God or a wicked, perhaps deranged, imposter. Religious Jews who reject His divinity but affirm Him as a noble ethicist are being extremely generous.

That said, there is a narrative problem in "The Passion's" depiction of Caiaphas (Mattia Sbragia). This is important not because Gibson betrays any anti-Semitism in portraying him, but because Caiaphas is the most overtly active character in the film.

Jesus (James Caviezel) has chosen passivity—being "led like a lamb to the slaughter." Indeed, the sickening violence Jesus undergoes reduces Him to a bloody, unrecognizable pulp early on in

the film, making it hard to identify with Him thereafter. That's the principle flaw in the film—which is far too gruesome for many viewers, akin in that way to "Saving Private Ryan" or "Reservoir Dogs."

Pontius Pilate, an indecisive bureaucrat, is buffeted by events and the whims of the crowd. Mary, John, and the Magdalene are anguished onlookers. Satan appears in the form of an androgynous, vaguely erotic Goth chick but mainly skulks and whispers.

Only Caiaphas takes decisive, ongoing action, making him in effect the Passion's anti-hero. But Gibson does little to establish his motivation for rejecting Christ or persecuting Him. We do not see flashbacks of Jesus overturning the tables in the Temple, calling the Pharisees "whited sepulchers," or otherwise making direct claims to displace Caiaphas's priesthood with His own. We have to infer all that from our memory of the Scriptures—which renders this film's Caiaphas something of a cipher. His cruelty and relentlessness seem insufficiently motivated. It is easy to see how a paranoid viewer, eager for hints of anti-Semitism, could read them into the empty spaces in the narrative. But Gibson didn't put them there. In fact, to the fair-minded viewer, Foxman's attack

upon the film will seem like a thinly veiled assault on the Gospels themselves. And this is supposed to be good for the Jews?

Gibson even proved amenable to editing out one “hard saying” from the Gospel narrative. After screenings with Christians garnered negative reactions to the scene, Gibson cut the statement by Caiaphas calling down Jesus’ blood on himself and his people. Thank God. This phrase, taken out of context, was abused in past centuries to justify persecution of Jews. It’s impossible to think of a more perverse, destructive interpretation of Jesus’ death than one that targets His own people. Christianity teaches that the sins of all men, of each individual man, and of the first man, were the cause of Jesus’ death. Insofar as particular Jewish people (several hundred at most) on Good Friday followed their leader in denouncing Christ to Pilate, they were merely serving as stand-ins for the whole human race. To blame contemporary Jews for their actions makes as little sense as sending Ralph Fiennes to stand trial in The Hague for his character’s crimes in *Schindler’s List*.

But Gibson did not go far enough for his enemies. They seem in fact implacable—though that does not stop self-hating Christians from trying. Some biblical scholars suggest the Gospel of John be edited or excised from the scriptural canon because it is “inherently anti-Semitic.” In 2003, some theologians associated with the U.S. Catholic Bishops colluded with several Jewish leaders to produce a document that effectively declared that Christianity was meant only for gentiles, not for Jews, so the Church should stop evangelizing them. When prominent Jewish Catholics, among others, pointed out such statements by Jesus as “Go nowhere among the Gentiles ... but go rather to the lost sheep of the house of Israel.” (Matt. 10:5) and “I was sent only to the lost sheep of

the house of Israel” (Matt. 15:24), the document was quietly dropped. Appropriately, the architect of that document was Eugene Fisher, the same man who helped the ADL orchestrate an attack on “The Passion”—based on the preliminary, stolen script. The bishops had to back away from that one, too, under threat of legal action.

The eagerness of liberal Catholics to assist in slandering the great Pope Pius XII—whose early anti-Nazi diplomacy has recently been documented, along with the hundreds of Jews he personally ransomed—is even more detestable. Ironically, there are certain parallels between Pius XII and “The Passion’s” Caiaphas. In each case we find a world religious leader existing under military occupation at the sufferance of enemies who persecute innocent Jews. Let Pius be judged by the same standards critics would have us use in judging Caiaphas. Which leader comes off better?

THERE IS **NO ROOM IN THE GOSPELS** FOR THE LIBERAL 19TH-CENTURY MYTH OF JESUS AS A **GREAT MORAL TEACHER**, UNJUSTLY PERSECUTED.

It is clear that the same spirit motivates the campaign against Gibson’s film, the attacks on Pius XII, and similar assaults against Christianity in public life. It’s more than just a rejection of Jesus’ claim to be the Messiah—a shocking assertion that requires the divine gift of faith to accept. It is an attack on Christian culture root and branch, an assertion that the Christian faith is a dangerous poison that must be purged from the earth to ensure social progress and the safety of other religions. This position, which most Jews would surely reject, is the basic assumption of contemporary secularism, which knows no race or creed.

But since Foxman is leading this particular *jihad* against the cross, one wonders whether he does not agree with Jewish scholar Hyam Maccoby. Interviewed for Ron Rosenbaum’s fascinating book, *Explaining Hitler*, Maccoby blames Christianity itself, its central doctrine of the divinity of Christ and His sacrificial death, for subsequent anti-Semitism and for the Holocaust. Maccoby asserts in his various writings that the core narrative of Christ’s death on the cross led directly and inevitably to Jews being sacrificed, en masse, in Nazi death camps. “Christians say the Holocaust is part of the evil of humanity,” he told Rosenbaum. “It isn’t the evil of humanity. It’s the evil of Christendom.” For this reason, Maccoby considers that the only forms of Christianity that are not intrinsically anti-Semitic are those that reject Christ’s divinity and redemption. On the same page, Maccoby insists that for him, “Christmas is a sinister festival,” since it

points ahead to Easter. Does Foxman agree? I don’t know. But his organization provides on its Web site a comprehensive guide for members on how to purge holiday celebrations in public schools and civic spaces of any reference to Jesus, the Nativity, or Christmas.

Perhaps it’s time to turn the tables on Foxman, who freely attributes to his opponents the darkest of motivations, and demand of him: How much of our faith do you demand that we renounce? How far do you intend to go? ■

John Zmirak wrote the first English-language biography of anti-Nazi activist and social philosopher Wilhelm Röpke.

[babylonian captivity]

Iraq: Losing the American Way

By repudiating our historic ways of war and democratization, the Bush administration threatens attempts at nation-building elsewhere.

By James Kurth

THE IRAQ WAR has been underway for less than a year, but it has already lasted long enough for us to get some sense of its place in American history and particularly in the grand narrative of America's role in the world. The war has a complex relation with the major dimensions of American foreign policy—particularly the diplomatic, military, and political—but it is increasingly evident that the war policy of the Bush administration represents a radical abandonment of traditional American ways of dealing with the world, ways that overall have served the United States very well.

First, the way that the administration prepared for the war—disregarding the objections of every international organization and most of America's traditional allies—was a sharp departure from the long-standing U.S. diplomatic practice of obtaining some form of international approval and legitimization for our wars and military interventions. The Iraq War represents a repudiation of the traditional American way of diplomacy. Second, the way that the administration has fought the war—deploying military forces unusually few in number and now stretched far too thin—has been a sharp departure from the long-standing U.S. military practice of using overwhelming mass not only to defeat an enemy but also to deter any renewed

resistance later. The Iraq War represents a repudiation of the traditional American way of war. Finally, the way that the administration has tried to establish stability and peace—promoting liberal democracy while imposing military occupation—is in some senses an extension of the historic U.S. practice with democratization projects, but it is one carried to such an unrealistic and impractical extreme that the prospects for success are bleak. The Iraq War represents a perversion of the traditional American way of democratization. In sum, the war is a three-dimensional assault on the American way in international affairs. It is reasonable to expect that it will cause serious harm to America's role in the world.

The diplomatic damage has already been much discussed by policy analysts. Certainly, the arrogant posturing and unilateral actions of the Bush administration as it went to war alienated most of our traditional European allies and provoked suspicion, resentment, and even anger in many. However, unexpected difficulties and experienced incapacities can teach even abrasive officials that help from others—even inferior others—can be a good thing. By now, almost one year into the war, the administration has been driven by its hardships in Iraq to solicit the assistance of

the very nations, and the United Nations, that it held in such contempt at the beginning of the war. And remarkably, but realistically, these nations and the United Nations are beginning to respond positively and to heal their breach with the United States. Most of the diplomatic damage from the war is likely to prove self-correcting and short-lived, perhaps like the quarrels of Russia and China with the United States regarding the Kosovo War five years ago.

The Iraq War is likely, however, to cause more grave and long-term injury to the U.S. military and to U.S. efforts to promote democracy abroad. This is because of its violations of the traditional American way of war and way of democratization.

The American Way of War

Military strategists and historians have discerned in some nations a distinctive strategic culture or way of war. In the last third of the 20th century, there was a widespread understanding among these professionals that there was a distinctive American way of war and that it was characterized by a reliance upon such advantages as (1) overwhelming mass (a pronounced advantage in men and materiel), (2) wide-ranging mobility (a pronounced advantage in transportation

and communication), (3) high-technology weapons systems, and, underlying and sustaining them all, (4) high public support for the war effort. The purest expression of this American way of war was, of course, World War II. Another excellent example was the Persian Gulf War. However, the origins of the American way of war lie in the greatest American conflict of all, the Civil War. The use of overwhelming mass was crucial to the final victory of the North; it was exemplified by the strategy of Ulysses S. Grant. Conversely, the use of wide-ranging mobility was critical to the initial victories of the South; it was exemplified by the strategy of Robert E. Lee.

The classical American way of war was a product of the distinctive geographical and economic features of the United States. The U.S. possessed a vast continental territory, which was endowed with ample natural resources and with a population larger than that of most European powers. Thus the United States almost always had a pronounced advantage in men and materiel. Only the Soviet Union could surpass the U.S. in this respect. In turn, mass geography and widespread population created a need for a correspondingly extensive transportation and communication network, and the large industry and advanced technology of the U.S. economy provided the means with which to build it. Furthermore, the United States was bordered by two oceans; it was not only a continent but also a continental island. This also created demand for a transportation and communication network that extended to other continents. This meant that the United States always had a pronounced advantage in the rapid movement of people and products in peace and of men and materiel in war. No power has ever surpassed the U.S. in this respect. The conjunction of a pronounced advantage in both mass and mobility made the United States the

most successful military power of the 20th century, and thereby made the 20th century the American century. No other military power could excel in both dimensions.

On the rare but important occasions when the United States could not deploy its advantages in both mass and mobility, the U.S. military faced serious problems. Both the Korean War and the Vietnam War degenerated into wars of attrition in which the U.S. military had the advantage in mass firepower but no obvious advantage in the mobility of its ground combat forces. In the last two years of the Korean War, both the U.S. Army and the communist armies were trapped in a static war of position near the 38th Parallel, and the end result was a stalemate. In the Vietnam War, the communist guerrilla forces had the advantage in mobility, and this contributed greatly to the U.S. defeat. Indeed, it is the nature of any guerrilla war that the insurgent forces have the advantage of mobility, and the counterinsurgency forces have the advantage of mass. It seems that the classical American way of war has no obvious answer if the military challenge comes from guerrillas and insurgents.

In the aftermath of its Vietnam debacle, the U.S. Army painfully examined the lessons of that war, and it largely concluded that the classical American way of war was really the only right way of war for the Army. The lessons learned were institutionalized in the curriculum of the Army War College, as well as several other military schools, and in the strategic doctrine, bureaucratic organization, and weapons procurement of the Army itself. Many of the lessons learned were crystallized in what became known as the Weinberger/Powell Doctrine (after Caspar Weinberger, secretary of defense in the Reagan administration and Gen. Colin Powell, chairman

of the Joint Chiefs of Staff in the first Bush administration). Central to the classical American way of war and its recapitulation in the Weinberger/Powell Doctrine was the idea that when the United States goes to war, it should do so as a nation defending its vital national interests against another nation, and when the U.S. Army goes to war, it should do so as an army fighting another army. Wars to advance peripheral, imperial interests and wars against insurgent forces were violations of the American way of war.

The Rumsfeld Transformation Project

From the beginning of the second Bush administration, Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld has worked vigorously and systematically to overthrow the classical American way of war and the Weinberger/Powell Doctrine and to replace them with a new program of military "transformation" and a new doctrine of preemptive (really preventive) war. He has moved to reduce the role of heavy weapons systems (armor and artillery) and large combat divisions in the U.S. Army and to increase the role of lighter and smaller forces (airborne and special operations); in effect, he seeks to reduce the role of mass and to accentuate the role of mobility. To implement his transformation project, he has canceled the Crusader heavy-artillery system, and he has appointed a retired Special Forces general to be the new Army Chief of Staff. Most importantly, however, Rumsfeld has seen the Iraq War as the pilot plant and exemplary case of his grand project of transformation. If the U.S. could win a war in Iraq with a transformed military and a transformed doctrine, it would also be a decisive victory in Washington for the thoroughly new American way of war in its bureaucratic struggles with the old one.

The Rumsfeld transformation project gains credibility because there are indeed some serious problems with the classical American way of war—particularly with the idea that the U.S. Army should only fight another army. The most obvious difficulty is that there no longer seems to be any other real army to fight. Indeed, neither the Army, the Navy, nor the Air Force have any equivalent force or “peer competitor” to fight. Although the Chinese nation might become a peer competitor to the American nation in a couple of decades, that is far in the future, and the last peer competitor—the Soviet military—is now far in the past.

The United States still has enemies, however, most obviously in transnational networks of Islamic terrorists but also in rogue states, such as North Korea. These enemies will seek to attack the United States not with conventional military forces or an American-style way of war but with asymmetrical warfare. At the upper end of the war spectrum, this will mean weapons of mass destruction, particularly nuclear ones in the case of North Korea. At the lower end of the spectrum will be terrorist operations like al-Qaeda and guerrilla warfare, with the Iraqi insurgents now becoming the exemplar. Of course, the most ominous threat comes from a diabolical synthesis of the upper end and the lower end—weapons of mass destruction in the hands of transnational terrorist networks.

The Rumsfeld transformation program and preemptive doctrine does not really address the challenge of rogue states that have already acquired nuclear weapons. Hypothetically, some combination of highly accurate intelligence and highly effective weapons, such as nuclear bunker bombs, could destroy an enemy’s stock of WMD. However, the failure to find any significant stock of such weapons in Iraq certainly casts

doubt on the accuracy of U.S. intelligence. And even highly effective weapons systems would have a hard time destroying widely dispersed stocks of biological weapons. The only way that the Rumsfeld transformation project can deal with the WMD threat is when a rogue state has not yet acquired these weapons and a U.S. military operation can destroy the rogue regime before it does so. But this would really be a preventive war, not a preemptive one. This was the case with Iraq and conceivably could become the case with Iran.

IT WAS NOT UNTIL THE UNITED STATES **INVADED IRAQ** AND IMPOSED A MILITARY OCCUPATION THAT THE U.S. **FACED ANY GUERRILLA THREAT.**

Nor does the Rumsfeld transformation project really address the challenge of transnational terrorist networks, such as al-Qaeda. This threat is better dealt with by a multidimensional array of agencies and instruments (intelligence, security, and financial) working with their counterparts in other countries that face similar threats, particularly those in Europe. The war in Iraq certainly has not helped to enhance these counterterrorist capabilities, and it may have made more difficult the necessary international trust and cooperation.

The Rumsfeld Army and Counterinsurgency War

The only task that the new Rumsfeld Army, with its lighter, more mobile configuration, can perform better than the old classical Army, with its heavy armor and artillery configuration, will be operations against an enemy that is even more light and mobile, such as guerrillas and insurgents. And here, several ironies are immediately apparent. First, the ori-

gins of the Weinberger/Powell Doctrine lie in the lessons learned from the Vietnam War, and its basic impetus was “no more Vietnams.” Among other things, this meant that the regular units of the U.S. Army would fight no more counterinsurgency wars. The Rumsfeld transformation project amounts to a radical overthrow of the Weinberger/Powell Doctrine, and it seeks to return the Army to the period at the beginning of the Vietnam War—the era when Secretary of Defense Robert McNamara was engaged in his own radical program

of military transformation and when other political appointees of the Kennedy and Johnson administrations were enthusiastic advocates of some major combination of high-technology and counterinsurgency. More fundamentally, the Rumsfeld project seeks to transform the U.S. Army into an instrument which will fight for peripheral, imperial interests, and not just for vital national ones. As such, the new way of war can be seen as the neoconservative way of war.

Second, it was not until the United States invaded Iraq and imposed a military occupation that the U.S. faced any guerrilla threat that needed to be dealt with by regular U.S. military forces. (Almost everyone agreed that the guerrilla forces in Afghanistan and in Colombia would be better handled by a combination of U.S. Special Forces and local military forces.) The U.S. occupation of Iraq has created, for the first time since the Vietnam War, the very problem that the Rumsfeld transformation project was supposed to solve.

Third, even before Rumsfeld began his construction of his new Army and his deconstruction of the old one, the United States already had a long established, lighter, and more mobile ground force. That was the U.S. Marines. During the first half of the 20th century, the Marines had far more experience and success with light and mobile operations than did the Army. This included operations against insurgents in the Caribbean basin and in Central America. With only minor modifications, and perhaps some expansion, the Marines could perform virtually all of the tasks that Rumsfeld's lighter, more mobile, transformed Army is supposed to perform. But his new Army may not be able to perform some of the tasks that the old army could perform so well, such as quickly overwhelming another peer competitor army, if one should ever come into being and pose a threat to the vital national interests of the United States.

The American Way of Democratization

The 20th century witnessed numerous attempts to bring democracy to countries that hitherto had been ruled by dictatorial or authoritarian regimes. Most of these efforts were promoted by the United States, and many of them were backed by U.S. military intervention and occupation. Because the 20th century was the American century, it was also the century of democratization. Indeed, the century began with the United States engaged in two separate military occupations to bring democracy (albeit of a distinctively American sort and in a somewhat distant future) to colonies of the former Spanish empire, one in the Philippines and one in Cuba; the Philippine occupation and successful repression of the insurgents there was especially bloody and costly. A decade later, President Woodrow Wilson defined the essence of this new century—which

indeed might be seen also as the Wilsonian century—when he first sent the U.S. Marines into several Latin American countries and declared that he was going to “teach the South Americans to elect good men,” and then sent the entire U.S. military into Europe and declared that the United States was going “to make the world safe for democracy.”

The U.S. attempt at the beginning of the 21st century to use military conquest and occupation to bring democracy to Iraq and, by a process vaguely defined, perhaps to its neighbors as well (particularly Syria, Iran, and Saudi Arabia) is thus the latest chapter in a grand American narrative has been underway for more than a hundred years. By now, many countries know what it means to be, in the words of Jean-Jacques Rousseau, “forced to be free.”

Indeed, there have been four great theaters where the United States has performed its epic drama of political democratization through military occupation, of ballots through bullets, over the decades. These were (1) the Caribbean basin and Central America from the 1900s-1930s (Cuba, the Dominican Republic, Haiti, and Nicaragua) and again from the 1960s-1990s (the Dominican Republic and Haiti again and also Grenada and Panama); (2) Central Europe from the 1940s-1950s (West Germany, Austria, and Italy); (3) Northeast Asia from the 1940s-1950s (Japan and South Korea); and (4) Southeast Asia from the 1960s-1970s (particularly South Vietnam).

Together, these add up to more than a dozen cases in which the United States has used military occupation to bring about political democratization. They provide useful precedents and lessons for the current efforts in Iraq. (The Bush administration and neoconservative writers have repeatedly cited the U.S. successes in West Germany and Japan, but they have been notably

silent about the large numbers of failures or disappointments elsewhere, particularly in the Caribbean basin and Central America.)

In addition, the 1990s were the decade of numerous attempts to bring democracy to the countries of the former Soviet Union and communist Eastern Europe. With the exception of Bosnia and Kosovo, these democratization projects did not involve military occupation by U.S. forces. However, as we will see, these ex-communist countries (almost two dozen in number) also provide plenty of evidence and lessons relevant to the prospects for democratization in Iraq.

The Bush administration and the neo-conservatives promoted the Iraq War and accompanying regime change as the first phase in a grand project that would bring democracy to Iraq's neighbors and perhaps even to the Middle East more generally. Whenever they had to present an historical precedent to show that this kind of radical and ambitious project had succeeded in the past, they pointed to West Germany and Japan.

They never mentioned the many other U.S. efforts to use military force to democratize countries in Latin America, and of course they never mentioned the epic U.S. failure in South Vietnam. (The one exception is Max Boot, especially in his important book, *The Savage Wars of Peace: Small Wars and the Rise of American Power*.) Nor did they mention the most recent, wide-ranging, and numerous efforts with democratization among the countries of the former Soviet Union and communist Eastern Europe. If any honest discussion about the prospects for democratization in Iraq and other countries of the Middle East had included any analysis of a few of these three dozen cases, the discussion would have ended with a general consensus that the prospects were surely bleak.

The German and Japanese Exceptions

The cases of West Germany and Japan certainly demonstrate that military conquest and occupation can bring about a successful and permanent democratization. The U.S. achievement in these countries was all the more impressive since, in the 1940s, the leading American area specialists and professional experts frequently argued that the peculiar features of German and Japanese history and culture made democracy an alien and unlikely system for these nations. When, in the early 2000s, the leading American area specialists and professional experts have made similar arguments about Arab or Muslim history and culture, one can understand why the promoters of the democratization project for the Middle East could dismiss these arguments and why they might do so in good faith. It is important, however, to look at the circumstances of the German and Japanese cases in more detail. There were three crucial ways in which these circumstances differed from those of today's Iraq.

A prior liberal-democratic experience. First, Germany and Japan (as well as Austria and Italy) actually had considerable experience with some version

a political system similar to the Weimar Republic. And Italy had had a functioning liberal democracy for more than two decades before Mussolini put an end to it in 1922. For a time, each of these countries had developed liberal, democratic, and even social-democratic parties. Although these parties were repressed by the later totalitarian or authoritarian regimes, in the late 1940s the experience was still in the memories of substantial portions of the population. Indeed, some of the prominent leaders of the liberal-democratic period were still there—Konrad Adenauer in Germany, Karl Renner in Austria, Alcide de Gasperi in Italy, and Shigeru Yoshida in Japan—and the U.S. occupation authorities soon drew upon them to assume leadership in the new (really re-newed) liberal-democratic systems.

With regard to this feature of prior historical experience, the contrast between West Germany and Japan in the late 1940s and Iraq (as well as Iran, Syria, and Saudi Arabia) today could not be greater. These latter countries have never been liberal democracies. Further, the most liberal (but hardly democratic) regime in Iraqi history was the monarchy of King Faisal II, but that was violently overthrown in 1958, almost half a cen-

efforts to impose democracy upon such countries as Cuba, the Dominican Republic, Haiti, Nicaragua, and Panama. Here, the only cases that can be said to be successful were the slow establishment of a liberal-democratic system in the Dominican Republic during the decade or so after the U.S. military intervention and occupation in 1965-1966 and the quick establishment of such a system in Panama after the U.S. intervention and occupation of 1989-1990. In contrast, each of the U.S. democratization projects of the 1900s-1930s ended in failure, with the liberal-democratic system overthrown and replaced by some kind of dictatorial regime.

A greater foreign threat. Second, and probably more important, West Germany and Japan in the late 1940s each perceived a foreign threat that was even greater than the one posed by the U.S. occupation. As oppressive as the military forces of the United States might have seemed to the West Germans and Japanese, there was the fear of something that would be even worse: the military forces of the Soviet Union. The threat from the Soviet military was especially obvious to the West Germans, who had ample evidence of the reign of pillage, rape, and murder that the Red Army inflicted upon Germans in the East and could be expected to inflict upon Germans in the West, if they ever got the chance. Even the Japanese feared a possible conquest by the Soviet military and revolution by the Japanese communists, particularly after they saw what the Soviets did to the Japanese colonists and soldiers they captured in Manchuria. As bad as the reality of the American occupation was for both nations, the specter of a Soviet occupation was a good deal worse. And it soon became clear to many West Germans and Japanese that only the American military stood in the way of that specter being realized.

WITH REGARD TO PRIOR HISTORICAL EXPERIENCE, THE **CONTRAST BETWEEN WEST GERMANY AND JAPAN IN THE LATE 1940S AND IRAQ TODAY** COULD NOT BE GREATER.

of liberal democracy only a couple of decades before, during the 1920s between the First World War and the Great Depression. The Weimar Republic, with its grand drama of blighted hopes and dark tragedy, is especially well-known, but Japan also experienced liberalization and even democratization in the 1920s. Austria had

tury ago. In Iraq, there is no historical base whatsoever for the American democratization project.

To get some sense of how successful externally imposed democratization would be in the absence of internally developed historical experience, one would have to look instead at the U.S.



With regard to this second feature, that of perceived foreign threat, there is again a great contrast between West Germany and Japan then and Iraq now. Of course, given the memory of the Iran-Iraq War of the 1980s and the close relations between the Shi'ite regime in Iran and the Shi'ite majority in Iraq, Iran would appear to pose a potential threat to Iraq. And given the long-standing hostility of the Turks to the Kurds, Turkey might also appear to pose a potential threat to Iraq.

But Iraqis perceive these hypothetical threats in the context of the ethnic hostilities within Iraq itself. For now, the Iraqi Shi'ites fear and loathe the Iraqi Sunnis more than they do the Iranian Shi'ites, and it even seems that for now the Iraqi Kurds fear and loathe the Iraqi Sunni Arabs more than they do the

Turks. And it is increasingly evident that both the Sunnis and the Shi'ites loathe the American occupation as much or more.

Again, to get some sense of how acceptable a U.S. military occupation would be in the absence of a still-greater foreign military threat, one would have to look not at West Germany and Japan but instead at the U.S. occupations in Cuba, the Dominican Republic, Haiti, Nicaragua, and Panama. In the cases where the occupation was prolonged beyond a couple of years, there developed substantial local resentment and even resistance. And in the two most successful cases (the Dominican Republic in 1965-1966 and Panama in 1989-1990), the United States withdrew its military forces and ended its occupation in less than a year.

An ethnically-homogenous population. Third, and probably most important, West Germany and Japan (and also Austria and Italy) were among the most ethnically homogeneous nations in the world. There were no significant ethnic minorities—they formed less than two percent of the populations—and there were no significant secession movements. Democratization did bring all sorts of political conflicts and cleavages—particularly around issues of economic class—but no ethnic group or territory voted to separate itself from the rest of the nation.

With regard to this third feature, the ethnic homogeneity prevalent in Germany and Japan is manifestly lacking in Iraq. As is well known, Iraq has never been ethnically homogeneous; from its creation in 1920, it has always been

divided into three ethnic parts, the Sunni Arabs, the Shi'ite Arabs, and the Kurds (who are Sunni, but non-Arab), with the Sunni minority imposing an authoritarian and usually brutal regime upon the Shi'ite majority and the Kurdish minority. Moreover, the three ethnic parts have roughly corresponded to three territorial parts, with the Sunni

Here the evidence is unambiguous. In virtually every country in the communist world where there was ethnic heterogeneity, democratization—which included free elections—was followed immediately by secession and partition. This was largely peaceful in the case of the Slavic and the Baltic republics of the Soviet Union and in the case of the

Iraqi people come to associate democracy with the U.S. occupation and with all the disruptions and humiliations that a military administration inevitably brings. Or it may fail because there is actually no Iraqi people at all, only three peoples who will use democracy to break away from each other—at best, this would result in three democracies, rather than one; at worst, it would result in three states engaged in a new war of their very own. Or it may fail because of all of the above. With all these paths leading straight to failure, it will take a miracle for the U.S. democratization project in Iraq to succeed.

The failure of democratization in Iraq will discredit similar U.S. efforts elsewhere. The damage will be greatest in the Middle East and in the Muslim world more broadly, where Islamism will be left as the only valid ideology and Islamization as the only vital political and social project. Elsewhere, the harm will not be as profound, but for a few years at least, other countries will dismiss any U.S. proclamations and promotions of democratization as just another preposterous, feckless, and tiresome American conceit.

The United States might be able to absorb and eventually recover from this failure in Iraq, rather like it absorbed and eventually recovered from its epic failure in Vietnam three decades ago. Indeed, 30 years from now, Islamism might itself be discredited in the Middle East, rather like communism is discredited in Southeast Asia today. But like that earlier war, at the end of the day virtually all honest and reasonable people will agree that it would have been best if the United States had never gone to war at all. ■

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THE UNITED STATES MIGHT BE ABLE TO **ABSORB AND EVENTUALLY RECOVER** FROM THIS **FAILURE IN IRAQ**, RATHER LIKE IT ABSORBED AND EVENTUALLY RECOVERED FROM ITS **EPIC FAILURE IN VIETNAM**.

Arabs in the center, the Shi'ite Arabs in the south, and the Kurds in the north (with mixed populations in major cities). Iraq was always an unstable equilibrium, a partition waiting to happen, artificially held together by the iron bonds of an authoritarian and brutal regime. In such circumstances, “regime change” would inevitably result in state change or even country change; in particular, democratization would mean that one or more of the three ethnic and territorial parts of Iraq would vote to separate itself from the others. One could have an Iraq, but without democracy. Alternatively, one could have democracy, but without an Iraq. But one could not have both.

To get some sense of how successful democratization would be with such pronounced ethnic heterogeneity, one would have to look not at West Germany and Japan in the late 1940s but instead at the recent and very extensive experience of democratization in the former communist countries. Certainly, one would have to look especially at the Balkans, which were once called the Near East and which is not that far geographically and sociologically from the contemporary Middle East.

“velvet divorce” between the Czech Republic and the Slovak Republic. It was violent and even genocidal in the Caucasian republics of the Soviet Union and in several of the republics of Yugoslavia. But be the process peaceful or violent, the democratization of multiethnic societies almost always issued in secession and partition. Given these results of democratization in multiethnic countries of the communist world in the 1990s—especially the violent results in the Caucasus and the Balkans, which are so proximate to Iraq both geographically and historically—it is almost incredible that anyone could seriously argue that the most relevant comparisons to Iraq were the homogeneous nations of West Germany and Japan in the 1940s.

The Coming Failure

In summary, ample historical experience with a wide variety of democratization projects predicts that the U.S. effort to bring democracy to Iraq will end in failure. That effort may fail because the Iraqi people do not have the cultural values, social conditions, or historical experience with which to construct a democracy. Or it may fail because the

Dictatorships & Double Standards

Don't mention state terrorism in "our" Central Asia.

By Peter Hitchens

THEY BOIL DISSENTERS to death in Uzbekistan, one of our newer allies in the global struggle for freedom and democracy. They also beat them up in the street, suffocate them, drag them to mental hospitals and forcibly inject them with drugs, ram bottles up their behinds in squalid prisons, and plant drugs on them. And that's apart from all the usual things to be found in such places, such as censoring the newspapers and rigging the elections.

It's no surprise, then, that the flight to Uzbekistan's capital, Tashkent, is almost empty after it stops to refuel in Armenia. Who but the determined, adventurous, or foolhardy would want to go, despite the beauties to be found in this landlocked despotism? Its reputation for near-medieval barbarity, combined with the more modern techniques of what used to be called the KGB, is not wholly surprising. It lies in that mysterious, legendary zone, half-mythical, half-real, and generally dangerous, which is to be found north of Persia and south of Russia. Once Victorian Britain and imperial Russia played out their Great Game here with India as the prize. Now the immense Caspian Sea oil reserves—and the problem of how to get them safely to Europe and America or perhaps China—are the cause of a new and more ruthless Great Game.

The political squalor goes on amid picturesque surroundings. The names of Uzbekistan's ancient Silk Road cities, Samarkand, Khiva, Bokhara, are like magic spells, and the places themselves do not disappoint. Little more than a

century ago, these regions were ruled by all-powerful emirs who imprisoned their opponents in bug-infested pits or had them hurled in sacks from the tops of high towers. Some of the most beautiful Islamic buildings in the world are to be found there. Turbaned tribesmen in the seething streets look as if they have checked their AK-47s in at the bus station. Even in modern Tashkent a short subway ride can take you deep into a Third World of robed traders and winding, mud-brick streets, where scrawny cows graze next to ancient mosques. Despite the strong evidence of recent Soviet colonialism—horrible concrete hotels, sagging apartment blocks and trams—this is Asia, not Europe, and the dangerous edge of Asia at that.

In Samarkand you may visit the actual tomb of Tamerlane the Great, the semi-cultured barbarian conqueror and mass-murderer who made pyramids from the skulls of his butchered victims. You will also find Tamerlane's image on the grandiose inflated banknotes and rearing equestrian statues of him in the public squares, where Stalin, Lenin, and Marx once stood. This aggressive, bloody monster is the new symbol of Uzbek nationhood, deliberately chosen by its dark, despotic ruler Islam Karimov. Karimov, a former Soviet apparatchik who turned nationalist when the USSR fell apart, inherited a country whose jigsaw borders were designed by Josef Stalin for his own devious purposes. Thanks to Stalin's deliberate mixing of rival peoples to ensure his own power, Karimov governs several minorities who would

rather be under different flags. But he also has a border with Afghanistan and an airbase at Khanabad that allows its tenants to dominate the Afghan skies. Until the 1990s, it hosted Soviet MiGs, Antonovs, and Sukhois. But now, in return for a \$500 million annual fee, Khanabad's runways are open to the U.S. military. No wonder Karimov is much caressed by Washington, and no wonder there is a large, heavily-fortified, dun-colored U.S. embassy in what might otherwise be a small insignificant country of 25 million souls, whose main exports are cotton to Russia and prostitutes to the Arab world.

Diplomats are supposed to understand this sort of thing. They are trained to be polite, if not friendly, to tyrants and to place strategic advantage above human rights. In truth, we rather expect them to do just that. Most of us, if we were honest, would admit to caring more about the uninterrupted supply of oil and gasoline than about the prisons of Central Asian republics we could not locate in an atlas. However, the recent frenzy of righteousness over Iraq led to an embarrassing and telling incident in Tashkent, which I now relate. For the British Ambassador to Uzbekistan, a certain Craig Murray, made the grave mistake of taking his political masters' pious rhetoric about freedom and democracy at face value.

He got up in a public place in Tashkent in August 2001 and furiously denounced the Uzbek authorities for their filthy treatment of political opponents. Murray, at 45, is the London For-

ign Office's youngest envoy. A career diplomat, not a political appointee, he seems to have been hired in a direct effort to change the image and style of Her Britannic Majesty's ambassadors. A convivial, uninhibited man, given to wearing Homer Simpson neckties, he had, until last year, an interesting and eventful series of postings. But his position became far too interesting when he declared in front of fellow diplomats and senior Uzbek officials, "Uzbekistan is not a functioning democracy, nor does it appear to be moving in the direction of democracy. The major political parties are banned; parliament is not subject to democratic election, and checks and balances on the executive are lacking.

his military facilities—a generosity not much appreciated by his former masters in Moscow and always at risk of being withdrawn by some future more pro-Russian or pro-Islamic regime.

The outburst led to much unhappiness among the U.S. diplomats based in Tashkent, whose awkward task was not made easier by their closest ally's fervor. A British businessman based in Uzbekistan, James McGrory, said, "The U.S. embassy makes no effort to conceal its inveterate dislike of the way in which he repeatedly and unequivocally slams the human-rights record of a region so heavily under U.S. influence." Not surprisingly, the Uzbek authorities were infuriated as well. But Craig Murray's friends

grounds," and his many friends in Tashkent feared that he was being forced out for having spoken out of turn. He then returned briefly to Tashkent, before succumbing to medical problems believed to be related to stress, and returned almost immediately to London for treatment. His allies went public with the story and seem to have saved his career for the moment. At the time of writing, he is back in his embassy.

By the standards of the diplomatic trade, Murray was rash, and there is little or no sign that his speech has improved conditions in Uzbekistan. It is hard to imagine how such a country, artificial from the start, in a region that has never experienced the rule of law or freedom of conscience, is going to be turned into a civilized democracy at any time in the foreseeable future. Dreams that the collapse of the USSR would bring about a new birth of freedom have proved to be just that: dreams.

But the cause of truth still owes Craig Murray a considerable debt. If the purpose of the Anglo-American alliance is what we have been repeatedly told it is, the establishment of Western liberty, civilization, and democracy, then that cause is indivisible. Supporters of ethical aggression in Washington and London—whether they be the new hard liberals or idealist neoconservatives—insist that their justification for invading Iraq is no mere pretext but a genuine new development in foreign policy. In that case, Uzbekistan is surely a place that badly needs a spot of intervention. If it were truly so, then Murray would surely have been praised and honored for his courageous speech, rather than being made miserable by his superiors. But of course it is not true, never was true, and never will be. ■

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IF STATE TERROR WAS TO BE FOUGHT IN IRAQ, THEN IT SHOULD SURELY ALSO BE OPPOSED IN UZBEKISTAN.

"There is worse. We believe there to be between 7,000 and 10,000 people in detention whom we would consider as political and/or religious prisoners. In many cases they have been falsely convicted of crimes with which there appears to be no credible evidence they had any connection." He suggested that the state used torture and referred to the deaths of two men who died after being immersed in boiling water.

Murray was speaking at a place called Freedom House, an officially tolerated, American-financed center for human-rights activists. Uzbekistan has several human-rights organizations, but in whispered conversations with dissenters there I got the impression that at least some of these organizations are tolerated because they are ineffective, while their existence serves to ease the consciences of the Western powers who appreciate Karimov's generosity with

suspect that American rather than Uzbek wrath led to what happened next: an astonishing public stand-off between Murray and his superiors in London. When he was chided for speaking out, Murray retorted that if state terror was to be fought in Iraq, then it should surely also be opposed in Uzbekistan. His chiefs in London are said to have told him it was "unpatriotic" of him to make such points while British troops were preparing for action.

The next thing he knew he was under investigation. The inquiry, by visiting officials, found nothing of substance—he had backed a visa application by a friend's daughter, and she had overstayed. He had allowed an embassy car to be driven down some steps to escape a traffic jam. He sometimes was not at his desk at precisely 9:00 a.m. But the result of all this was that he was flown back to London on unstated "medical

His Father's Son

Rove finds a model in McKinley and Republicans seek a new Reagan, but Bush's greatest influence is his famous family.

By Kevin Phillips

WILLIAM MCKINLEY, the 25th U.S. president, who served from 1897 until his assassination in 1901, was a plausible model for George W. Bush in 2000, and Karl Rove was shrewd enough to see it.

Back in the 1890s, the old Civil War coalition that elected Lincoln and won the war had begun to run out of fuel, and the five presidential elections between 1876 and 1892 produced roughly a draw. Some new dynamic was necessary to kick-start the Republican engine. Somewhat similar circumstances existed by the late 1990s, with the fading of the New Majority coalition that had elected Nixon and Reagan by landslide proportions in 1972 and 1984. George W. Bush, Rove thought, might pull off a clarifying follow-up realignment in the McKinley mode.

Many years ago, when I was writing *The Emerging Republican Majority* in the 1960s, McKinley's re-alignment—then the last one on the GOP side—intrigued me, too. As a result, I had always considered the Ohioan a much-underestimated president. Consequently, when Arthur Schlesinger launched his current "American Presidents" series, I signed up for the McKinley volume, which was published in 2003. It was uplifting research, therapeutic preparation for my subsequent work, *American Dynasty: Aristocracy, Fortune and the Politics of Deceit in the House of Bush*, just published this January.

McKinley was so much better than his oft-distorted reputation that George W. Bush comes up notably short by comparison, as does the Bush Republican coalition—an amalgam with a disproportion of religious fundamentalists, war hawks, labor-baiters, and corporate lobbyists that McKinley would have found repulsive.

McKinley, regarded in his time as the most successful president since Lincoln, suffered during the Progressive and New Deal years from the 1920s to the 1940s for three principal connections. First, his support for protective tariffs, which by the 1930s had fallen out of favor; next, his embrace of the gold standard, linking the U.S. dollar to the yellow metal rather than to inflationary silver

tious, preferring an international framework for limited bimetallism (gold and silver coinage). As for Mark Hanna, the conclusion of late 20th century biographers like Margaret Leech, H. Wayne Morgan, and Lewis Gould was that he took orders from McKinley rather than vice versa. In 1899, Hanna sulked when McKinley told him he would not have a well-connected lobbyist in his cabinet.

On war and religion, McKinley was careful. Although he successfully ran the Spanish-American War of 1898 from a White House war room, he rejected jingoist demands for months because he believed—as later science would prove—that the Spanish in Havana harbor had not blown up the visiting U.S. battleship *Maine*. In religion, he

MCKINLEY WAS SO MUCH BETTER THAN HIS OFT-DISTORTED REPUTATION THAT GEORGE W. BUSH COMES UP NOTABLY SHORT BY COMPARISON, AS DOES THE BUSH REPUBLICAN COALITION.

production; and last, the Democratic-constructed image of McKinley as a tool of corporations, trusts, and Ohio political boss Mark Hanna.

In fact, even before McKinley became president, his preferred trade framework had swung to tariff reciprocity and bargained reductions. The wages of laborers were his focus, not the feeding of corporations. On gold, he was cau-

was ecumenical, rejecting the Religious Right of his era—the Prohibition Party and the anti-Catholic American Protective Association. He won many of his largest majorities in the teeming immigrant cities and shaped a national Republican majority that lasted until the stock-market crash of 1929 and the Great Depression. To win the 1896 Republican presidential nomination,

McKinley had to beat the party machines led by New York boss Tom Platt and Pennsylvania leader Matt Quay.

The discerning reader will already have gathered that in many ways, McKinley, far from being the proto-Bush of his era, was the un-Bush. However, before turning to the possibility that the 2004 election will yield a new national realignment, it is probably useful to confront yet another dubious analogy: the idea of George W. Bush as a lineal descendent of Ronald Reagan rather than George Bush senior.

Many war-drummers on the Right have stressed Reagan-George W. continuities, so let us note some discontinuities. From utilities deregulation to Social Security privatization, Bush has sought to gut major elements of the New Deal. Reagan supported Franklin D. Roosevelt and the New Deal in four presidential elections and trimmed its basic programs but little as president. In labor matters, where Reagan was con-

first president to have been married to two different Hollywood movie stars. Nobody suspected theocracy on his watch. Nor did Reagan ever embroil the United States in a dubious Middle Eastern conflict with rising casualties and poorly calculated objectives.

So if Bush is not 1) a second McKinley or 2) a second Reagan, what is he? More than anything else, he is a second George Bush—the second presidential dynast of the House of Bush. Obviously, there are differences between the two—for example, George W.'s religious fundamentalism versus his father's proper Episcopalianism, and the younger's cowboy, shoot-'em-up view of foreign policy versus his father's greater emphasis on multilateralism.

But the underlying similarities are weightier. The stylistic differences between father and son hide even more important continuities. To begin with, in 1999 and 2000 George Bush senior revved up his old contributor network for his son, and the Bushes drowned the

operations. The crony capitalism and financial wheeling-and-dealing practiced by George Bush senior and his siblings has actually been exceeded by the next generation of George W. and his brothers Jeb, Neil, and Marvin. George W.'s orchestration of tax cuts on dividends and apparent elimination of the estate tax sums up the family's dual constituency: investors and inheritors.

Faithful to the oil and energy industries is yet another multi-generational Bush continuity. If the administration of George senior was the first in which the president came from the oil industry, the regime of the younger Bush is the first in which both the president and the vice president do. The family's ties to Enron parenthetically spanned Bush senior's vice presidency and presidency and then Bush junior's Texas governorship and presidency until Enron's late 2001 bankruptcy.

Another Texas-based policy of both Bushes involves the persisting commitment of the Lone Star State elite to cheap Mexican labor. Bush senior opened up Mexico to low-wage U.S. factories through NAFTA, and the younger Bush is seeking much the same result by opening up the United States to illegal Mexican immigrants. Besides threatening U.S. security, *de facto* amnesty for illegals increases the downward pressure on American wages.

Yet another constant of Bush family business activity involves ties to the Middle East going back four decades to Bush senior's early 1960s offshore oil drilling for the Emir of Kuwait. No other political family has had even remotely similar connections. Saudi princes consider the Bushes "almost family," and Bush senior has been thick with them ever since his close liaison with the Saudis as CIA director in the 1970s. Both Bush presidents have been involved with the Saudi bin Laden family through investments—George H.W. Bush via the

BUSH SENIOR OPENED UP MEXICO TO LOW-WAGE U.S. FACTORIES THROUGH NAFTA, AND THE YOUNGER BUSH IS SEEKING MUCH THE SAME RESULT BY OPENING UP THE UNITED STATES TO ILLEGAL MEXICAN IMMIGRANTS.

strained by some sympathies going back to his union days, Bush has no such qualms. As the AFL-CIO political director commented, "George W. Bush makes Ronald Reagan look like Mother Jones."

Where Bush is hailed by many conservative preachers as the first president to be simultaneously the national leader of the Religious Right—on account of his religiosity, appointments, and policies—Reagan gave them more imagery than substance. He rarely attended church and inculcated family values so lightly at home that his daughter posed nude for *Playboy*. Reagan was also the

Republican nomination contest in an unprecedented money flow. Corporations and lobbyists provided a large portion of the soft and hard contributions. Both the Bush I and Bush II administrations were thronged by lobbyists, a far cry from William McKinley, who would not have even one in his cabinet.

Both the 41st and 43rd presidents shared the top-one-percent economics that has been bred into their family by four generations of Bushes clustering in securities firms, banks, brokerage houses, investment management groups, and thinly disguised tax-shelter sales

Carlyle Group and George W. Bush through the financing of his 1979 Arbusto oil partnership. The president's brothers Neil and Marvin both have current Persian Gulf business connections. What we do not yet know is whether these commercial entanglements crippled the George W. Bush administration's handling of possible Saudi connections to terrorism before and after 9/11.

Iraq, alas, is another shared preoccupation and bungling. Bush senior's 1980s involvement in secretly building up Saddam Hussein's Iraq continued through 1990 and was a major factor in *New York Times* columnist William Safire's refusal to back Bush senior for re-election. As this came out in 1992, it helped to defeat Bush, and clearly the younger Bush carried the idea of getting even with Saddam into the White House in 2001.

Let me conclude with the continuity that both Bushes have also been among the nation's worst contributors to federal budget deficits and debt. Their financial management has been so opportunistic that both have caused deficits to balloon. Conservatives have finally started to understand this.

So can George W. Bush manage a 2000-2004 realignment? Certainly not in the style of McKinley, or indeed any other election-based upheaval in the small-d democratic or small-r republican tradition. But the possibilities of building a dynasty around power, money, and a terrorism-fed politics of fear are not to be sneezed at—and neither is the possibility of an Emerging Garrison-State Majority should we experience further attacks like 9/11. ■

Kevin Phillips published The Emerging Republican Majority in 1969. His latest book, published by Viking in January, is American Dynasty: Aristocracy, Fortune and the Politics of Deceit in the House of Bush.

Karl Rove is concerned about a continuing rise in the unfavorable ratings

for the president. New sample polling has caused concern because it reflects the negative impact of the Iraq War and the growing public recognition that the war was an elective one, given the failure to find the WMD that were used to justify the invasion.

Vice President Cheney is not yet perceived by Rove as a major liability to the president's re-election campaign, even though his unfavorable ratings remain much higher than those of Bush. Cheney was strongly identified with the campaign to promote war in Iraq because Saddam was about to acquire nuclear and other weapons that would threaten the United States.

Advisors to the first President Bush, such as Brent Scowcroft, have been agitating against retaining Cheney on the ticket, now blaming him for corrupting the intelligence process by encouraging the incorporation of alarmist and sometimes fabricated information into the National Intelligence Estimate of October 2002. Scowcroft, who is head of the President's Foreign Intelligence Advisory Board (PFIAB), ordered a PFIAB examination of the intelligence community's information on Iraq. The PFIAB concluded that the Pentagon's parallel intelligence analysis unit, located in the office of the Undersecretary for Policy Doug Feith, relied on unreliable and fraudulent information from Iraqi exiles led by Ahmad Chalabi. Scowcroft believes Cheney encouraged and protected this effort by the civilian neo-conservatives and that the product had much more influence on the president than intelligence produced conventionally.

An upcoming report from Congress on Iraq intelligence will also criticize CIA Director George Tenet for allowing some of the dubious information from Iraqi exiles to be used in national intelligence analyses.



According to a new intelligence assessment based on field reporting from Baghdad, ethnic tensions in Iraq are accelerating,

and tribal and communal violence is likely to increase even after the U.S. troop withdrawal and the turnover of political authority to an Iraqi government. The potential result: civil war for control of the country. The report contradicts the naïve assertion by Deputy Secretary of Defense Paul Wolfowitz before the war that there were no ethnic tensions to worry about. The assessment, which was requested to determine the strength of the insurgency against the American occupation, also notes the continuing strength of the resistance and the likelihood that insurgency activities will increase during the scheduled troop rotation of U.S. forces in March.

Although there are varying estimates of the strength of foreign fighters, the so-called international jihadis, the indigenous resistance, primarily from Sunnis, appears to constitute about 95 percent of the insurgency. The recent capture and interrogation of Hassan Ghul, a Pakistani who is an al-Qaeda "facilitator," provided important information about the involvement of foreign jihadis. It also revealed that the response to al-Qaeda's call for Islamists to flock to Iraq has been disappointing. Most of the suicide bombings in Iraq are being conducted by radical Iraqi Islamists, particularly those affiliated with the Kurdish fundamentalist group Ansar al-Islam, not by foreigners. ■

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Intern(ment) Scandal

A PC “Day of Remembrance” forgets key facts.

By Roger D. McGrath

A YEAR AGO, Rep. Michael Honda (D-Calif.), introduced House Resolution 56, which would make February 19 a National Day of Remembrance for those Japanese who were “interned” during World War II. It was on February 19, 1942, that President Franklin Roosevelt signed Executive Order 9066, requiring the evacuation of Japanese aliens and American-born Japanese along with German and Italian aliens from the Pacific Coast. After a year in the House Committee on the Judiciary, the resolution has now been placed on the House calendar.

Honda’s resolution contains a series of misrepresentations that have passed for fact for so many years that they are now generally accepted without question. Moreover, the resolution posits President Jimmy Carter’s Commission on Wartime Relocation and Internment and its report, “Personal Justice Denied,” as the final authority on the subject. After “20 days of hearings” and “over 750 witnesses,” the commission concluded that E.O. 9066 was not justified by military necessity but was the result of “race prejudice, war hysteria, and a failure of political leadership.” That conclusion, however, is contrary to the facts as revealed by MAGIC, the decryptions of coded Japanese transmissions. The commission ignored MAGIC entirely in its original report, as it did witnesses who were available to proffer information supporting Roosevelt’s order. The few witnesses who attempted to testify in support of E.O. 9066 were drowned out by an unruly mob of spectators.

John J. McCloy, the Assistant Secretary of War in 1942, who monitored the evacuation and relocation, said the proceedings were “a horrendous affront to our tradition for fair and objective hearings Whenever I sought in the slightest degree to justify the action ... ordered by President Roosevelt, my testimony was met with hisses and boos such as I have never, over an experience extending back to World War I, been heretofore subjected to. Others had similar experiences ... it became clear from the outset of my testimony that the Commission was not at all disposed to conduct an objective investigation.” The officer in charge of the evacuation, Karl R. Bendesten, was subjected to similar treatment and simply stopped in the middle of his testimony. “I knew it would be fruitless,” said Bendesten. “Every commissioner had made up his mind before he was appointed.”

Although the DOD released the ultra-secret MAGIC files in 1977, the commission, with its huge staff and millions of taxpayers’ dollars, was either ignorant of the files or chose to ignore them. What MAGIC reveals is stunning: hundreds of resident Japanese were acting as spies, feeding information to Japan. If the U.S. had arrested the individual spies, it would have revealed to Japan that her codes had been broken. Faced with a similar dilemma, Prime Minister Winston Churchill allowed Coventry to be bombed without warning.

In 1942, some 112,000 Japanese were living on the Pacific Coast. About 40 per-

cent were resident aliens and the remainder, by virtue of U.S. birth, were American citizens. The citizens, however, were mostly children, and when the U.S. declared war on Japan, their parents became enemy aliens. Moreover the Japanese emperor claimed all Japanese, wherever born, as subjects. They were referred to as *doho*, meaning countrymen. Japanese residents in the U.S. sent their children to “Japanese school” on Saturdays. A teacher in one of the schools told his American-born students, “You must remember that only a trick of fate has brought you so far from your homeland, but there must be no question of your loyalty. When Japan calls, you must know that it is Japanese blood that flows in your veins.”

Resident Japanese also sent their children to Japan for schooling. By 1940, more than 20,000 American-born Japanese had been educated in Japan. Known as *kibei*, they were fluent in Japanese, steeped in Japanese history and culture, and supporters of Japanese expansion in the Far East. They could hardly be distinguished from young militarists in Japan. Lt. Cmdr. K.D. Ringle of the Office of Naval Intelligence had been investigating the *kibei* for several months when the Japanese perpetrated their sneak attack on Pearl Harbor. In January 1942, he submitted a report saying:

[T]he most potentially dangerous element of all are those American citizens of Japanese ancestry who have spent the formative years of

their lives, from 10 to 20, in Japan and have returned to the United States to claim their legal American citizenship within the last few years. Those people are essentially and inherently Japanese and may have been deliberately sent back to the United States by the Japanese government to act as agents.

An example of war hysteria? Hardly. *Kibei* formed the Sokoku Kenkyu Seinen Dan (Young Men's Association for the Study of the Mother Country) and the Sokuji Kikoku Hoshi Dan (Organization to Return Immediately to the Homeland to Serve) and called for all American-born Japanese to renounce their U.S. citizenship. Nearly 6,000 did. They became known as "renunciants" and were interned at Tule Lake Segregation Center in northeastern California. In camp they greeted the rising sun, cried "banzai," blew bugles, drilled, celebrated on Pearl Harbor Day, rioted, and demanded expatriation to Japan.

Thousands of other American-born Japanese served in the armed forces of Japan. Several of them became infamous for their interrogations and tortures of American prisoners. The most notorious was California-born Tom Kawakita, known as "Efficiency Expert" for his diabolical methods of torture. When American bombers began hitting Japan and the prisoners suspected the war's end was near, Kawakita told them, "We will kill all you prisoners right here I will go back to the States because I am an American citizen."

Throughout 1941, the U.S. frequently intercepted reports of resident aliens and Japanese Americans providing information to Japanese agents. In a decrypted message on May 9, for example, a Japanese agent in Los Angeles reports, "We have already established contact with absolutely reliable Japanese in the San Pedro and San Diego area,

who will keep a close watch on all shipments of airplanes and other war materials We shall maintain connection with our second generations who are at present in the [U.S.] Army, to keep us informed of various developments in the Army. We also have connections with our second generations working in airplane plants for intelligence purposes."

In a decrypt on May 11, a Japanese agent in Seattle mentions intelligence concerning "the concentration of warships within the Bremerton Naval Yard, information with regard to mercantile shipping and airplane manufacture, movements of military forces ..." The agent also said, "We have made arrangements to collect intelligences from second generation Japanese draftees on matters dealing with troops, as well as troop speech and behavior." A "first generation Japanese," who was a union committee chairman, is identified as providing a report on the labor movement. "[F]or the collection of intelligences with regard to anti-participation organizations and the anti-Jewish movement, we are making use of a second generation Japanese lawyer." And so it goes for hundreds of pages.

When a Japanese spy was arrested, it was only under circumstances that would not compromise MAGIC. Richard Kotoshirodo, a Japanese-American working with a Japanese agent in Hawaii, was arrested shortly after the bombing of Pearl Harbor. The agent's telephone had been tapped months before, making it clear that Kotoshirodo was supplying the agent with intelligence concerning the U.S. Navy. Through coded transmissions to an off-shore ship, Kotoshirodo's intelligence was relayed to Japan. Since a trial would have revealed that the U.S. had not only intercepted the signals but had decrypted them, Kotoshirodo was simply transported to Topaz relocation center in Utah.

Honda's resolution follows the Carter commission in ignoring the critical reve-

lations of MAGIC and mistakenly conflates "internment" and "relocation." The great majority of Japanese were not interned but required only to relocate outside of the Western Defense Zone, an area that included California, the western halves of Oregon and Washington, and a small portion of Arizona. Those who were not able to move were eventually taken to relocation centers, built with the same materials and on similar patterns as Army bases.

Japanese could leave a relocation center if they could reestablish themselves outside of the Defense Zone, and some 35,000 did so. Those who relocated on their own by the end of March 1942 did not go to the centers. More than 4,300 Japanese left to go to college at government expense and thousands left to work on farms. Meanwhile, in the relocation centers the death rate was lower and the birth rate higher than that of the general American population. So, too, was the graduation rate from high school. At the time, the Japanese-American Citizens' League (JACL) praised the government for providing the relocation centers. Dillon Myer, the director of the War Relocation Authority, said, "Nothing was done regarding the relocation centers without the approval of the JACL."

If I were a loyal American of Japanese descent, I would not have been pleased with the evacuation order. Nor would I have been thrilled with having to uproot myself from my home on the Pacific Coast. However, as an emergency wartime sacrifice, it is hardly the greatest. Just ask those Marines who regard February 19 as their Day of Remembrance. On that date in 1945 they stormed ashore on Iwo Jima, where more than 6,000 of them died. That's a sacrifice to remember—and honor. ■

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Arts & Letters

FILM

[*Good Bye, Lenin!*]

Eastward Ho!

By Steve Sailer

THE GERMAN HIT “Good Bye, Lenin!” is a well-made sentimental farce with a strikingly unsexy theme—a young man’s concern for his ailing mother—but it’s more interesting as a social phenomenon. In Germany, it’s the all-time German-made box-office champ, a distinction achieved by being both the beneficiary and promoter of the “Ostalgia” fad: nostalgia for the late and, one would have hoped, unlamented puppet state of East Germany.

Besides all the usual spying and lying, the unique accomplishment of East German communism was turning Prussians into shoddy craftsmen. Even 15 years later, Easterners remain significantly less productive than Westerners. Yet, life in the German consumer paradise is now so boring that trendy young people from the posh Rhineland rent dilapidated two-cylinder Trabants to putter around East Berlin, admiring the Stalinist architectural monstrosities and stopping at recently opened boutiques that carry only the crud manufactured under the old regime.

The West German-born writer-director Wolfgang Becker hit upon an unoriginal but serviceable plot gimmick for evoking Ostalgia. When West Germany lures away Alex’s doctor father, his schoolteacher mother pledges her troth to the Socialist Fatherland. She devotes her abundant energies to organizing Young Pioneer patriotic sing-alongs and penning sarcastic but socially constructive letters to garment factories chiding

their inability to make clothes that fit actual human beings: “We East Berliners will just have to work harder to make ourselves as short and square as you clearly believe we should be.”

In October 1989, the Soviet Empire is teetering, and the now 20-year-old son is marching in a protest when the Stasi goons fall on him with billy clubs. Passing by, Alex’s mother sees her beloved son being bludgeoned by the representatives of the state she adores. She suffers a massive coronary and lapses into a coma for eight months. When she finally stirs, the Berlin Wall has come down, the Federal Republic has absorbed the Democratic Republic, and capitalist consumerism is running amok.

THE MOST DISTURBING ASPECT OF OSTALGIA IS THE HINT THAT GERMANS FIND FREEDOM UNINSPIRING.

The doctor tells Alex that the slightest shock could kill her, so he resolves to recreate the old order in her bedroom. Her elderly and unemployed neighbors, resentful of being thrown on the scrap heap of history by the triumph of capitalism, play along with his charade. When his mother asks for her favorite groceries, Alex roots through garbage cans for old communist bottles into which to pour the new capitalist wine flooding the store shelves. Most ambitiously, with the aid of an East German video archive, he fakes the tedious, poorly produced propaganda newscasts his mother finds so reassuring.

One day, feeling better, she wanders outside and sees a giant statue of Lenin being airlifted away and mighty BMWs thronging the streets. Improvising desperately, Alex concocts from footage of November 9, 1989 a documentary showing hordes of refugees from capitalism climbing over the Wall into East Berlin.

In the hands of a Tom Stoppard, this could be quite funny indeed. But Becker keeps the comedy on a surprisingly short leash and plays up the family pathos, with even Alex’s father putting in a late and unresolved reappearance.

As the devoted youth, Daniel Brühl’s likeable masculinity distracts from the inevitable suspicion that only a gay son could identify so closely with his mother’s feelings. But the 47-year-old Katrin Sass is too young and vigorous to play the mother. Instead of a frail creature needing to be protected at all costs, her character appears to be in her immediate post-menopausal prime, a woman who would adjust happily to a new society more open to her talents. Of course,

the harsh truth is that the old and ill just aren’t much fun to watch on screen, so we rarely see what dying really looks like.

The most disturbing aspect of Ostalgia is the hint that Germans find freedom uninspiring, at least in its contemporary manifestation as superficial Euro-materialism. That just doesn’t seem to satisfy the depths of the German soul. Of course, after the last 90 years, the rest of us probably don’t want Germans looking too deeply into their souls.

For 200 years, when new emotions likes Ostalgia swept Germany, the world needed, for better or worse, to pay attention. Today, presumably, Germans have reached Francis Fukuyama’s end of history, so we can safely write off Ostalgia as a campy and/or pathetic novelty. Then again, maybe not: these are still Germans we’re talking about. ■

Rated R for brief language and sexuality.

BOOKS

[*An End to Evil: How to Win the War on Terror*, David Frum and Richard Perle, Random House, 304 pages]

Invade the World

By Leon Hadar

SOME OP-ED PIECES are destined to become books. You read 800 words of commentary in the *New York Times* and it whets your intellectual appetite. If you happen to be in the book-publishing business, your We-Have-A-Bestseller bulb lights up. A few phone calls later, trees are being cut down, and 30,000 more words are shaking up the intellectual universe and helping a struggling academic purchase a (used) Jaguar.

Like Samuel Huntington's "The Clash of Civilizations," which originally appeared in *Foreign Affairs*, there is a genre of articles that should be expanded and reincarnated as hardbacks and paperbacks. There is conversely that other kind of book—the average presidential candidate's Deep Thoughts or Andrew Sullivan's musings on how to prosper as a Conservative Gay Catholic—that should have been condensed into a very brief op-ed. On second thought, wouldn't that great masterpiece *The War Over Iraq*, by neoconservative propagandists William Kristol and Lawrence Kaplan, have come across better if its pages were left in tree form?

Now following in the tiny intellectual footsteps of the Kristol-Kaplan duo is the Perle-Frum pair of neocon pamphleteers, setting even lower standards for this genre of non-fiction writing. The page upon page of sloppy text that is *An End to Evil*, with its crude style, arrogant tone, and collection of half-truths and lies, could have certainly been reduced into a few paragraphs fit

for the *Wall Street Journal*. But no self-respecting neocon would miss an opportunity to publish a book, get on television, and collect generous royalties.

Evil was written "at high speed through high summer" as the authors put it. Michael Ledeen graciously read the manuscript "and through his own important work, helped [Frum and Perle] understand the terror masters." Comments came from neocon luminaries such as Ahmad Chalabi's friend in the Pentagon, Harold Rhode, and conspiracy kook Laurie ("Saddam Hussein is responsible for 9/11, anthrax, AIDS, and erectile dysfunction") Mylroie. The result is an embarrassing cut-and-paste job that pretends to be scholarly analysis but includes no index, no bibliography, and just a few footnotes.

But in our post-9/11 world, dominated by the Kristol-Podhoretz *famiglia's* incestuous tentacles, is it really surprising that every con man is a king? That the *Evil* that Frum and Perle have produced was reviewed in the *Washington Post's* prestigious "Book World" by none other than Lawrence Kaplan, who praised the authors for taking up the "good fight" and promoting Wilsonian liberalism "with very sharp teeth"? Or that Perle and Frum have been spending the weeks since the publication of *Evil* being interviewed as though they were the successors to George Kennan and Henry Kissinger?

"We have wanted to fight," our two macho men state in a bombastic introduction entitled "What Now?", contrasting themselves with "soft-liners" who do

(Perle) and book contracts (Frum). And let's not forget the "war of ideas," to which our commanders devote an important chapter. Someone has to fight on the *National Review* blog or protect the nation from the trenches of the American Enterprise Institute.

So fasten your seatbelts. Dick and Dave want to take us on a long and rough ride that would make the invasion of Iraq look like a *Weekly Standard* picnic on the shores of the Euphrates.

We'll start with North Korea, which we are going to blockade and force to get rid of its nuclear weapons, just like we did to Cuba, but this time we might actually end up bombing the commies. They might retaliate and destroy Seoul, which explains why those softies in the South "favor a policy of appeasement of the North." But we are going to act whether the South Koreans like it or not and attack the North's nuclear facilities. Actually "we don't know where all these facilities are" But don't get too depressed. Our Drs. Strangelove "hope" that it will be possible to avoid full-blown war if the "credible buildup to an American strike" persuades the Chinese to force Kim Jong Il to cry uncle. If not? Well, the Americans will re-deploy their troops so that only the natives will perish. The Korean Peninsula would eventually be unified under a pro-American democratic government, with the American Empire winning another round.

Then (or is it at the same time that we eradicate North Korea?) we go after the mullahs in Tehran. That might not make sense to many readers, since the Iranians provided support to our allies in the

"WE HAVE WANTED TO FIGHT," OUR TWO MACHO MEN STATE.

not want to fight. (Retired generals Colin Powell and Anthony Zinni?) Their book is nothing less than a "manual for victory"—which means that the Guys Who Brought You Iraq are now ready to send you to new wars here, there and everywhere. You name the country, they want to end it. Not that they are going to do it personally. After all, someone has make big bucks in defense consulting fees

Northern Alliance and applauded our victory against secular Saddam because they can't wait for us to make Iraq democratic and let their co-religionists into power. But, you see, the mullahs are building a nuclear bomb, and they are not secular or democratic and are harboring al-Qaeda terrorists. Readers might wonder, doesn't that mean that Iran looks like our ally Pakistan, which also

is not secular and not democratic and already has a bomb—and where Osama bin Laden and his gang are probably hiding? Our authors are not about to resolve this cognitive dissonance. Notwithstanding the pose they adopt as master strategists, they are not able to deal with the nuances of Realpolitik. Americans, they proclaim, need to make clear that “we regard Iran’s current government as illegitimate and intolerable and that we support the brave souls who are struggling to topple it.” Never mind that those “brave souls” are not asking for our help and that if they come to power they will continue developing a nuclear program.

Next on the target list is the Ba’ath regime in Syria. According to the CIA, the Syrians have been providing us with valuable assistance in fighting terrorism. Perle and Frum, who believe Americans “may be so eager to protect the right to dissent that we lose sight of the difference between dissent and subversion,” would probably feel at home in Syria, where you first torture a suspect and then ask questions. Moreover, the Syrians have a weak regime, a bankrupted economy, want to strengthen diplomatic and economic ties with the U.S., and are pleading for us to help them make peace with Israel. Any sensible student of for-

eign policy (a.k.a. “appeaser”) would probably propose that we try to exploit these conditions to improve ties with Damascus. But not our Dirty Two. After our great victory in Iraq, we are on a roll, and so we should present President Assad with several ultimatums and make clear to him that “the consequences of refusing will be considerably greater for him than the consequences of acquiescing.”

The next target, Saudi Arabia, is an interesting case. America went to war in 1991 to protect the royal family and its gas station from an Iraqi invasion. Yet the Saudis provide a large source of money and men for al-Qaeda and continue to control an Islamic anti-Western network. Perhaps it is time to bid farewell to the Saudis and create incentives for the Europeans and Japanese—who, unlike the Americans, are dependent for their economic survival on the energy resources in the Persian Gulf—to start taking care of their own interests. Instead, Perle and Frum are promoting a strategy that would not only bring about the collapse of the Saudi regime, but would also lead to the creation of a Shi’ite state and U.S. military occupation of the regional oil fields.

Preparing readers for America’s Manifest Destiny in the Arab world, our

experts provide a brief introduction to the Middle East in which the United States and Israel are depicted as playing a benign and enlightened, if not altruistic role in the region. “Light touch” is the way the authors refer to U.S. policy in the Middle East since 1945.

But there wasn’t anything “light” about the U.S. move in 1953 to depose Prime Minister Mohammad Mossadegh and install Mohammad Reza Shah to the Peacock Throne in Iran or about the U.S. alliance with corrupt Arab regimes in the Persian Gulf and Egypt or our massive military and economic assistance to the Israeli state. After all, this extensive U.S. intervention in the Middle East ignited the Arab oil embargo in 1973, led to a dangerous nuclear standoff with the Soviets during the Yom Kippur War, helped create the conditions for the 1979 revolution in Iran, and served as a backdrop to a list of Middle Eastern wars and acts of anti-American terrorism, not to mention the two Gulf Wars with Saddam. Add the U.S. partnership with the anti-Soviet Mujaheddin in Afghanistan, which helped give birth to Osama & Co., and one can start grasping the reasons for anti-American sentiments in the Middle East.

Thanks to Perle, Frum, and the rest of the architects of the war in Iraq, it is all getting even deadlier through a process by which Iraq is starting to look like what the West Bank and southern Lebanon have been to Israel—a bloody quagmire. But that seems to fit with the agendas of the neocons. *Evil* tries to place these developments in a framework that suggests the United States and Israel are allies in the war on terrorism, sharing common interests and values against a bloc of anti-Western Arabs and Muslims backed by European Arabists, liberals, and anti-Semites. *Evil* provides a storyline in which the Oslo peace process, which was promoted by elected Israeli governments and the majority of the Israeli public, is depicted as part of an anti-Israeli scheme advanced by Arabists in the State Department. In this account, the neocons are a “tiny minority” that “dares propose” an effective strategy. If one

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“dares propose” that the neocons are crusading for a democratic empire in the Middle East, the critic is then disparaged by the authors as harboring defeatist and anti-Semitic attitudes.

Indeed, the *Evil* narrative—with its evocation of the themes of anti-Semitism, the British-American alliance, and French defeatism—creates a sense that it is the Second World War all over again. “It’s victory or holocaust,” declare our armchair strategists as they call on Americans to follow them to “dark places” where the foundations for a Global American Democratic Empire would be set up in preparation for the final great battle against ... France-led Europe? Russia? China? Who knows?

A skeptical reader observing the mess in post-war Iraq might “dare propose” that the defeatists got it right and Perle and Frum were wrong. Did they not predict that we were going to discover nuclear, chemical, and biological weapons in Iraq? That Americans would be greeted as “liberators”? That we would find evidence of links between Saddam and bin Laden? That the French, Germans, and Russians would eventually have no choice but to follow American “leadership”? That oil production in Iraq would generate so much wealth as to make its economy self-sufficient in a few months? That we would not need to maintain large numbers of American troops in Iraq? That a democratic Iraq would serve as a model to the entire Middle East?

Evil, giving *chutzpah* a very bad name, contends that all of the above have happened, that “even in the absence of stockpiles of weapons Saddam was known to have created, the threat from his programs was undeniable.” They compare the anti-American insurgency in Iraq to post-Appomattox attacks by former Confederate soldiers, the Ku Klux Klan, and Jesse James against Union soldiers. And they comfort us by explaining that even if we do not get a Jeffersonian democracy in Iraq, the American occupation will prove to be a valuable exercise whose lessons can be applied in the next stages

of empire-building. If we are facing problems in Iraq, the ones who should be blamed are those “faint hearts” who refused to listen to Perle’s advice and impose Ahmed Chalabi on the Iraqis as their democratic leader.

As the neocons’ grand designs are proving nothing more than intellectual fantasies, some speculate that their ideas are being marginalized. Escalating attacks against U.S. troops have forced the Bush administration to accelerate the timetable for ending the occupation, and the White House seems to be adopting now policies that run contrary to the guidelines proposed by Perle and Frum. Bush rolled out the red carpet for Chinese prime minister Wen Jiabao and warned Taiwan to refrain from antagonizing Beijing by challenging the “One China” policy. China, together with Japan and South Korea, has also played a leading role in a multilateral effort to defuse the North Korean nuclear crisis. And a similar multilateral strategy has been advanced for dealing with Iran’s nuclear ambitions. When it comes to the other two members of the “Axis of Evil,” President Bush has rejected the neoconservative approach.

Some have compared the planners of the Iraq debacle to the architects of the war in Vietnam, the “best and the brightest,” as David Halberstam described them. But if you really want to get a sense of the mighty brainpower that produced *Evil*, read the authors’ recommendations about Libya. “Libya should be regarded and treated as what it is: an implacably hostile regime. The illusion that Mohammad al-Qaddafi is ‘moderating’ should be treated as what *it is*: a symptom of the seemingly incurable wishful delusions that afflicts the accommodationists in the foreign policy establishment.” *Evil* was published the same week we learned Qaddafi was moderating his policies and getting rid of his WMD. ■

Leon Hadar is a Cato Institute research fellow in foreign-policy studies and the author of Quagmire: America in the Middle East.

The Two Americas: Our Current Political Deadlock and How to Break It, Stanley B. Greenberg, Thomas Dunne Books, 288 pages

Blue State Blueprint

By Martin Sieff

STANLEY GREENBERG, longtime pollmeister/political guru to President Bill Clinton, has produced a well-written, copiously researched, and genuinely important book on the current state of American politics. But it is most important in the ways he least intended.

Greenberg contends that the United States has been deadlocked and drifts aimlessly in an era dominated by divisive Republican “wedge” politics, and that the only way the Democrats can regain both power and control over the national agenda is to produce an “inclusive” vision that harks back to before the party fell victim to a host of suicidally obsessive interest groups.

The author’s analysis of the growth and nature of the divided, Red versus Blue America that showed up on the charts of the November 2000 presidential election results is indeed comprehensive, witty, and succinct: the best of its kind. And he also shows exceptional, albeit not unexpected prescience in recommending exactly the kind of neo-populist, “broad tent” strategy that Howard Dean pioneered and John Kerry has now smoothly purloined from him for the Democrats’ fall campaign against President Bush.

Greenberg even argues persuasively that the Democrats can co-opt the spirit of renewed national unity and common purpose that gave Bush such a prolonged boost after the terror attacks of 9/11. Feedback from sampling groups in Tampa, Florida, the high-tech East Coast, and Heartland Iowa, he writes, “reflected the crisis and spirit of unity following 9/11, including an increased confidence in government’s capacity to address the

country's broad challenges. They wrote of community, where programs 'benefit the entire population' and all citizens are equal and 'given the same benefits.' The country needs to come 'together' and act for 'the needs of the whole.' This is an aspiration that will be important to Democratic thinking in this period."

In the short term, the surprising resurgence of Senator Kerry fulfils Greenberg's prescription for a Democratic revival. The Dems now appear to have a chance to take back the White House in November by following exactly the kind

of gentler, softer, and ever-fuzzy "One America" message that Greenberg recommends. And the liberal, free-trading, anti-death penalty, ever-compassionate Kerry is an ideal standard bearer for it.

For that matter, if Kerry fails, Hillary Rodham Clinton or John Edwards might well be perfectly positioned to ride the same horse to victory in 2008. There is a lot of weight to Greenberg's claim that "Because the Republicans have overreached on behalf of corporate interests in an age of public revulsion against it, Democrats have the opportunity not just

to attack but to become champions of the whole by defending the public interest and its values." But will a Democratic victory this coming November, or four years later, really allow Greenberg's vision to be fulfilled?

Greenberg believes he has produced a recipe to create the "JFK America" that never was. He writes, "This is a moment for JFK Democrats or Opportunity Democrats advocating a 100 percent America where all share in America's bounty." One can already see how well that line will play on TV ads featuring John Kerry in front of a giant, unfurled Stars and Stripes this fall.

But the industrial titan powering millions of high-paying manufacturing and heavy-industrial jobs that gave prosperity and balance to President Kennedy's America has long since gone. Indeed it was none other than "Camelot Jack" himself who launched its destruction with his Kennedy Round of international tariff cuts, to which his own country sacrificed the most.

One will search the index of Greenberg's book in vain, however, for any reference to "protectionism." "Tariff" rates two mentions, both in passing. There are a few references in the text to illegal immigration, but only in the context of how the Democrats will look best in dealing with it in some ill-defined "inclusive" and "compassionate" way.

Nowhere does Greenberg appear to recognize that the destruction of the prosperous industrial working class across the United States and the ongoing loss of middle-class information technology jobs to the Third World, especially India, needs to be confronted by policies more bold and imaginative than progressive tax plans or the redistribution of existing resources. What use is it to reapportion chunks of the national American pie when the pie itself is shrinking by the day?

Suppose John Kerry wins the presidency in November riding Greenberg's horse. Could he restore prosperity, business confidence, and the vitality of America's heavy industrial and manufacturing sectors simply through the kind of

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big-government policies that Greenberg recommends? Given the inevitable failure of such policies, would a President Kerry then finally abandon the prejudices and policy preferences of a lifetime and embrace domestic business while protecting it from outside competition?

There is no suggestion that Kerry or any other Democratic president might ever have to face such a decision in Greenberg's policy prescriptions. But Greenberg certainly signals his enthusiasm for free-trade policies that will continue to leave the American domestic market, and the livelihoods of millions of Americans, wide open to the destructive effects of uncontrolled Third World competition. He takes pains to emphasize that his "JFK Democrats, open and engaged in the world, will be progressive and idealistic about America itself."

"Open and engaged," "progressive

WOULD A PRESIDENT KERRY ABANDON THE **PREJUDICES OF A LIFETIME?**

and idealistic": it is impossible to imagine that any JFK-style liberal inspired by those '60s buzz words—as, of course, Greenberg and Kerry both are—would ever see the reestablishment of protection for America's industries or the reimposition of immigration controls to protect America's own citizens as compatible with them.

It is typical of Greenberg that in painting his vision of a new "JFK Democrat" and "100 percent America," he includes "thumbnail sketches of proposals for universal health care, a free state-college education (with community service stipulations) and closing corporate tax loopholes."

But there is nothing here about getting the EPA or other regulatory agencies off the backs of the small businesses that generate 70 percent of new jobs per year or preventing nations like China, Japan, and now India from devastating entire sectors of U.S. industry and commerce by taking advantage of wildly unfair terms of trade. There is not a single reference in Greenberg's index

to either "industry" or "manufacturing."

But Greenberg's book is indeed genuinely important. It is a succinct guide to the almost-evenly-split opposing camps that have defined American domestic politics over the past generation. And it offers a tactical vision and slogan that could indeed mobilize a Democratic electoral majority in either 2004 or 2008 to retake the White House for a single term. There is truth to the blurb from, of all people, William Kristol that this book "lays out the best strategy I've seen for beating Bush."

However, Greenberg fails to grasp the nature of the underlying industrial/economic causes of America's decline over the past 40 and more years, and the degree to which the nation's social pathologies, old and new alike, have grown inexorably out of them. He may be able to help effect a liberal Democra-

tic resurgence in the short term but only at the cost of its total failure in the long run. And the long run, in this case, would be anything longer than a single term in the Oval Office. Worse yet, he appears to have no idea of how wealth is actually produced in the real world or how badly America's capability to create it has eroded.

Therefore, for all its claims of bold and revolutionary new vision, this is a curiously archaic book. It is the expression of a mind still rooted in the misty dreams of the 1960s, taking for granted an endless cornucopia of domestically produced and protected industrial wealth that once seemed capable of overcoming every challenge and answering every need, but that now only exists in the pages of history books. Stan Greenberg's "100 percent America" is the vision of a dreamer who never grew up. ■

Martin Sieff is chief news analyst for United Press International. His book American Epochs: The Eras of U.S. Political History will be published next year.

MUSIC

Haggard Like Never Before

By Marcus Epstein

IN 1969, MERLE HAGGARD first performed a new song, "Okie From Muskogee," in Fort Bragg, North Carolina. Opening with the lines, "We don't smoke marijuana in Muskogee/We don't take no trips off LSD/We don't burn our draft cards down on Main Street/We like living right, bein' free," it championed Middle American values in a pop culture dominated by hippies and antiwar protesters. After he played the set, a group of GI's demanded that he play it again, and Haggard knew he had struck a chord. The song went to the top of the charts and swept the Country Music Awards. Haggard followed this success with another anti-antiwar song, "The Fighting Side of Me."

These two songs made Haggard the bard for the Silent Majority. The tunes were played across the country at rallies for Republican candidates and George Wallace. Richard Nixon invited him to play at the White House, and Gov. Ronald Reagan granted the ex-con a full pardon. In a recent Country Music Television documentary about "Okie from Muskogee," Pat Buchanan observed, "They had Bob Dylan and Joan Baez. We had Merle Haggard."

Though "Okie from Muskogee" was Haggard's most popular song, it destroyed any chance he had for crossing over into the rock scene. At the time, country music was gaining popularity among rock fans, and Haggard saw his early hit "Mama Tried" covered by the Grateful Dead. But while the antiwar Johnny Cash joined in duets with Bob Dylan and remained popular with the rock crowd through his recent death, the left-wing music scene has shunned Haggard to this day.

In the current climate, one would think that making pro-war country music would be very profitable. Songs such as Toby Keith's "Courtesy of the Red, White, and Blue (the Angry American)" and Darryl Worley's "Have You Forgotten?" have become huge hits. Keith even anointed "Okie from Muskogee" as "The original 'Angry American.'" But Haggard, never one to follow the prevailing wind, has been very critical of the war, and his latest album, *Haggard Like Never Before*, reflects his stance.

The album is typical Haggard, with an amalgam of folk, blues, swing, and country. His thoughtful lyrics deal with the life of the working man, love, and politics. It opens with "Haggard Like I've Never Been Before," which is a traditional honky-tonk tune about how life on the road is not as rewarding for Haggard when traveling without his wife and family. He teams up with Willie Nelson on an excellent cover of Woody Guthrie's "Reno Blues."

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The first single off the album, "That's the News," was written shortly after the end of Operation Iraqi Freedom. The song is critical of the government and media for declaring the war over when there were still hundreds of thousands of troops occupying the country.

HAGGARD EVEN OFFERED TO DO A CONCERT WITH THE DIXIE CHICKS.

It opens with the lines "Suddenly it's over, the war is finally done/Soldiers in the desert sand still clinging to a gun/No one is the winner and everyone must lose/Suddenly the war's over, that's the news." It goes on to criticize the media for obsessively focusing on "someone missing in Modesto" while there were still thousands of American soldiers in harm's way, and concludes with the poignant lines "Suddenly the costs of war is something out of sight/Lost a lot of heroes in the fight/Politicians do all the talking, soldiers pay the dues/Suddenly the war is over, that's the news."

Haggard also makes allusions to the Bush administration's attack on civil liberties. He has said in recent concerts that in 1961 he enjoyed more freedom as an ex-con on parole than he does as a pardoned man now. The song "Lonesome Day" subtly questions the state of freedom in this country: "When the men in black come kicking down your door/When our celebrated heroes have been kept and locked away ... /They'll be singing up in heaven while we're living here in hell/Giving up our freedom and buying what they sell/Who's going to sing the song of freedom when freedom's gone away/It's going to be a lonesome day."

Haggard clearly supports the troops and the song "Yellow Ribbons" expresses that sentiment while gently questioning whether U.S. forces should be deployed in Iraq: "Pray God will bless America for doing what we dare/Then go tie a yellow ribbon in your hair."

Being critical of the Bush administration and its foreign policy is not the most career-savvy move for a country musician. In February 2003, the Dixie Chicks

faced massive radio and record boycotts after making comments critical of George W. Bush and the then-impending Iraq War. Radio stations reacted by sponsoring the bulldozing of their CDs. Others burned them. Toby Keith, whom the Dixie Chicks criticized for his over-

simplified patriotism displayed in "Courtesy of the Red, White, and Blue," superimposed a picture of their lead singer, Natalie Maines, on a picture of Saddam Hussein as the backdrop for one of his concerts. Haggard found the display disgusting and was one of the few country musicians to support the beleaguered ladies openly. He wrote on his website

I don't even know the Dixie Chicks, but I find it an insult for all the men and women who fought and died in past wars when almost the majority of America jumped down their throats for voicing an opinion. It was like a verbal witch-hunt and lynching. Whether I agree with their comments or not has no bearing.

Haggard even offered to do a concert with Keith and the Dixie Chicks, though neither accepted.

The media dwell on the novelty of a formerly intolerant, "love it or leave it" singer like Haggard transforming himself into an antiwar activist. This view oversimplifies Haggard's change. In the 1960s, Haggard was disgusted by the antiwar protesters who were denouncing American soldiers in Vietnam. Now, he finds that it is the media and the government who are "walking on the fighting side" of the troops. The government, not the Dixie Chicks, sent hundreds of thousands of American soldiers to wage a war that is not in America's interest. Merle Haggard isn't afraid to say so, and his message remains as refreshing now as it was in 1969. ■

Marcus Epstein is a student at the College of William & Mary.

A Publisher and a Gentleman



The best newspaper proprietor I have ever worked for—bar none, and that includes myself—has been Lord Black of Crossharbour. Conrad Black

and his wife, the writer Barbara Amiel, have been in the news lately, and the news has not been good. The trial that began last Wednesday in the dispute between Hollinger International, the newspaper company, and Conrad Black, will decide who—if anyone—has been telling porkies or playing with the till. Until then, however, I reserve the right to come to the defense of a man whom I have grown to admire throughout the 20 years I have written for his papers.

One of the first things I learned upon arriving on these shores as a rather scared 11-year-old headed for a strict boarding school called Lawrenceville, was that over here everyone is presumed innocent until proven guilty. (In Greece, back then, the reverse was true.) But this principle has not been applied where Conrad and his wife are concerned. Talk about trial by the press. The Blacks have been pilloried, their good names dragged through the mud, their achievements belittled as if they were three-time losers already. I will not deal with the business side of the dispute; this will be decided by the court. But I will tell you about the man—the extraordinary man who is Conrad Black.

I know many newspaper proprietors who started with a small local paper and finished owning television stations, cable companies, and sheep farms in Australia, but only one who began by owning goldmines in Canada and traded them in for newspapers. As Mark Steyn wrote, “Beating swords into ploughshares is one thing, beating your ploughshares into words is another.” No one has loved newspapers better than Conrad, and no newspaper proprietor

knows more than Conrad. The man is a walking encyclopedia, with vast knowledge of history, the classics, politics, and anything else one can possibly think of. Last month, while dining with him in New York, the conversation turned to shipping. As the son of a rather major ship-owner, I was embarrassed at the things he knew about the business that I did not. His massive biography of FDR has been judged to be the definitive study of a man as controversial as Conrad himself.

Why is Black so controversial? That’s easy. He does not take any crap from know-nothing journalists back in Canada and England, and his withering letters to the editor backing up his arguments with facts show up how little journalists know. He is also a true conservative. Space does not permit the countless examples I have to show how Black changed British politics by backing Margaret Thatcher’s and Ronald Reagan’s policies when the rest of the proprietors went running for cover.

Once the Evil Empire collapsed, Conrad and I parted ways in a manner of speaking. I did not agree with his continued embrace of Israel and the neo-cons, starting with Richard Perle and Elliot Abrams.

When Dominic Lawson was appointed editor of Conrad’s *Spectator* in 1990, the first call he took was from the Israeli ambassador. His Excellency wanted Dominic to fire me. Lawson, who is Jewish, said thanks, but no thanks. Conrad was next. The Israeli demanded my head. Black refused. He never even told me about it. When Lawson published an article that forced one of Maggie’s most trusted ministers to

resign, Thatcher was furious. Black, who was very close to her, did not even bother to discuss it with Lawson. He backed his editor to the full. Ditto when a so-called anti-Semitic article about Hollywood made it into the elegant *Spectator* pages. Black was threatened with a boycott of his then 200 newspapers by the likes of Barbra Streisand, Steven Spielberg, and others of their ilk. Again, he stood firm, not even sending a note to his editor.

When Puerto Rican leaders and Mayor Giuliani threatened another boycott over remarks made by yours truly over the disgusting behavior of Puerto Ricans during their annual parade, Conrad defended me and told them to do what they must. Three times during the last 15 years, Conrad has written letters to the *Spectator* denouncing what I have written about Israel. Three times I metaphorically packed my bags. But there was no firing. Instead, Conrad came up to me at a party and told me he hoped I would stay another 25 years with his magazine.

So much tripe has been published against his wife, I don’t know where to begin—that she’s a snob, that she treats editors as help, that she talks about her airplanes. It’s all lies, and I happen to know. I knew Barbara when she was poor and a very good writer, and she remained the same after she married Conrad. In fact, she prefers to be with writers and journalists than the people her husband’s position forces her to see most of the time.

Conrad Black took the *Telegraph* company, which was moribund, and turned it into a powerful weapon for the values we conservatives believe in. He was a great proprietor, but more important, a great visionary. He and his wife should get their good name back and the sooner the better. True conservatives cannot afford to lose them. ■

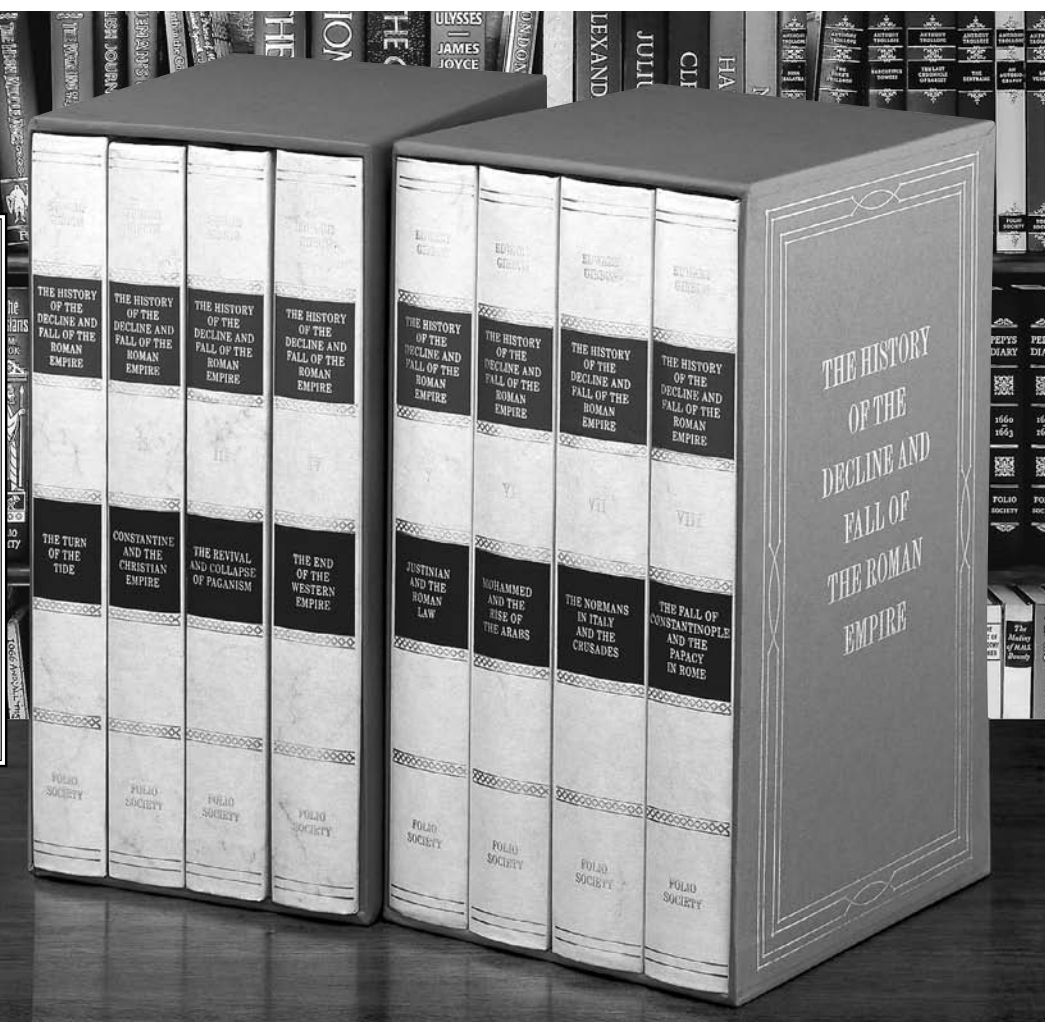
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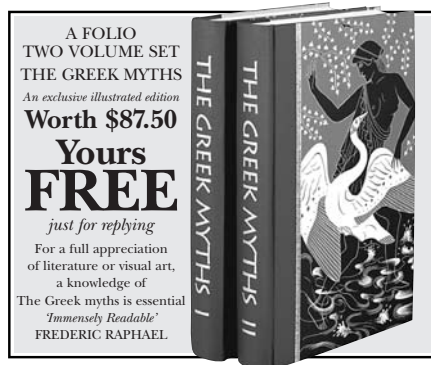
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A Poet's Challenge to the President's Vision of America

In Memoriam was originally inspired by a person full of hope, curiosity, and goodness, Tatiana Prosvirina, a student who died at the age of seventeen. The later poems of the collection were written in response to the reckless and immoral celebration of the militarism of the Bush Administration. After the 9-11 attacks the world needed vision, humanity, and sophistication; instead it got blind, simpleminded war-mongering. The Bush Administration's selfish commitment to war and wealth has been barbaric, obscene, and monstrous.

The Administration's declaration of global war on terror is an antediluvian approach to finding ways to address the world's problems of sectarian conflict, organized crime, overpopulation, poverty, hunger, despair, increasingly virulent diseases, environmental depredation, reckless depletion of global resources, and degradation of traditional cultures by the West's culture of consumption, amusement, and spectacle.

That so many Americans voted against George Bush indicates that many millions of Americans are still inspired by a romantic idealism and spirituality rooted not in blind nationalism but in the love of family and community and in a reverence for nature—God's handiwork. This is a spirituality of love, not hate, a spirituality of the sacred moment, not of an eager anticipation of Armageddon, a spirituality of sharing, not of greed, a spirituality that comes from living wisely, not simplemindedly.

It will be task of Tatiana's generation to restore spiritual health to an American way of life that has become obscenely wasteful and destructive of habitat, human and natural, of families and communities, and of individuals. It will be this younger generation that will reestablish America's moral authority in the world and make America a force of good for all human beings.

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